

CARMEN LIES

By

SCOTT LYON SURBER

Bachelor of Arts

Oklahoma State University

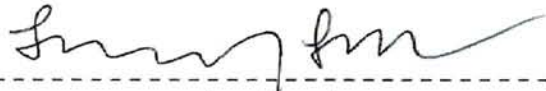
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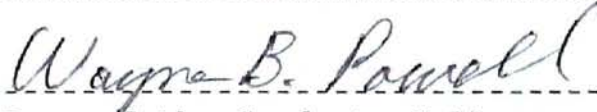
Thesis Approved:



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Thesis Adviser



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Randi Eldvik



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Dean of the Graduate College

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## INTRODUCTION

The automotive industry has been the occasional fodder for film over the years. In the past decade, however, though films have dramatized the car business and the people who make it their livelihoods, they have seldom focused on the industry as their subject. Some that do treat the car business, films such as Made in America and Cadillac Man, have used that world as a backdrop to color the characters of a story being told. The stereotypes of car salesmen as shallow, money-loving womanizers are prevalent in these works as well as in the light-hearted romp, Used Cars. Though Used Cars does specifically target the business as its subject, it still does so superficially and stereotypically without really revealing the industry in any depth.

In this introduction I will discuss these films and my treatment, Carmen Lies, which does take a closer look at the industry itself, laying bare the inner workings of this interesting and questionable sub-culture. I will then explain the problems I have faced in creating this satirical work as well as review the devices, characterizations, and music employed in its completion.

In Made in America (dir. Richard Benjamin, 1993), Ted Danson plays Halbert Jackson, the owner of a car lot who, through a donation to a sperm bank years earlier, and the bank's ensuing mistake, finds himself the newly discovered father of an African-American daughter mothered by Sarah Matthews, played by Whoopi Goldberg. Since the stereotypes



of people in the car business have been universally negative for years, the use of the industry here is an effective device designed to shape notions about Hal's character--or lack thereof. His tactics are questionable, and his sole purpose of existence--the pursuit of money--seen as shallow and meritless. Hal, therefore, must be an unsuitable candidate for fatherhood, and his overcoming his own inclinations as well as Sarah's low opinion of him drives the plot. The use of the industry and its stereotypes as backdrop works to color Hal in Made in America and effectively buoys this comedy of errors; however, the film's focus is on the interesting relationships and situations created and not the industry specifically.

Cadillac Man (dir. Roger Donaldson, 1990), though set at a car lot, also deals less with the industry and more with the art of the sale, and therefore could have just as easily employed almost any type of salesman in the lead role. The film focuses on Robin Williams, as Joey O'Brien, a salesman who loves to sell, and plays on the stereotypes of salesmen as a device to generate plot and to resolve the film's action in the end. Joey's life is a shambles--he's estranged from his wife, unsuccessful at juggling his girlfriends, in deep debt to a local mafioso, and he must sell twelve cars in a one-day sales contest at his dealership in order to keep his job. The action unfolds when a co-worker's extremely upset husband, who suspects his wife is having an affair, takes everyone at the dealership hostage. The business as backdrop here effectively allows the film to focus on the

qualities necessary to drive its plot--salesmen are womanizers. Joey takes the blame for the affair (even though it is actually the owner's son who is the culprit) and is believable, in part because he conforms to the stereotype and in part because he is having affairs. The stereotypical qualities which Joey possesses--the gift of gab and the art of the "deal"-- allow him to get himself and the other hostages, including the husband, out alive. Joey transforms from an insensitive, self-absorbed individual (in the beginning he attempts to sell a widow a car at her husband's funeral) to a likeable and caring one. In the end, he saves the day, reunites with his wife and daughter, and saves the jobs of all at the lot. Like Made in America, Cadillac Man negatively stereotypes salesmen in its beginning as a device to drive the plot, and allows for character growth to a more positive image. Yet, in both of these treatments, the industry is not the focus, it is merely a backdrop for the characterization.

Used Cars (dir. Robert Zemekis, 1980) focuses on the business as subject, but the plot begins with a used car salesman, Rudy Russo, trying to scrape together enough money to go into his true calling--politics. Again, those in the car business are stereotyped as undesirable, analogized here with another stereotypically undesirable group--politicians. But as in real life, the business pulls Rudy back in, and the true plot soon unfolds with a strong Hatfield and McCoys motif. Two feuding twin brothers played by Jack Warden, Luke and Roy L. Fuchs, are depicted in a life and death

competition to drive one another out of business. Roy L. is the stereotypical car man and the more successful of the two--he will do anything to sell a car including bribing judges and commissioners in order to have a new highway access ramp go through his brother's lot. When he discovers his bribery has failed and the ramp is slated to go through his lot, he underhandedly tries to get Luke's property through inheritance. Roy L. sends a demolition driving mechanic to wreck Luke's prized 1957 Chevy, with Luke in it, in the hope that his bad heart will give out (if car salesmen have hearts, they must be bad). The plot would succeed but for Rudy, played by Kurt Russell. Rudy's promise to Luke, that he would keep Roy L. from getting his hands on Luke's lot, motivates him to fight back and one-up Roy L. at every turn. When Roy L. creates a circus, literally, at his lot, Rudy "skates" Roy L. (steals his customers) by turning Luke's lot into a striptease joint. Rudy's need for another ten-thousand dollars to buy his way into the State Senate prompts Rudy and his co-workers to create new ways of generating business, spinning the film off into a whimsical romp. From pre-empting the Presidential address with a rogue commercial to gain national exposure, to avenging Luke's death by filming a commercial in which they blow up Roy L.'s inventory exclaiming that they are "blowin' the Hell outta high prices," Rudy and Roy L.'s war depicts the car business, and its tactics, more closely as the subject of the film.

Used Cars, though it focuses on the business as its subject, does so more superficially than does Carmen Lies.



In Carmen Lies, I was more interested in revealing the business from the inside--the practices and characters which populate it--and the effect that participation in this business has had on the protagonist, Carmen. Given that focus, on character more than plot, I found myself facing problems of how to structure the film. Because the plot device I chose was to reveal the action of the story through the memories of multiple characters, I utilized Rashomon and Citizen Kane as possible paradigms. In Rashomon we have the story of an event being recounted, through memory, by different individuals. Each of the individuals' stories are slightly different, thus preventing us from knowing the real truth of what occurred. In Carmen Lies I found the structure of Rashomon compelling as a device (since the truth of what caused the explosions at the lot is never really concretely resolved) but felt this structure shifted the focus. Since the memories of each interviewee in Carmen Lies are of different aspects of the same day's events, the film's structure resembles that of Rashomon; however, because these characters are remembering parts of an event--that day at Hickeyland--the structure really has only a minimal connection with Rashomon. Much like the characters in the old parable of the blind men and the elephant they all know him at some level, but none of them has a picture of him in totality. With this in mind, I considered the structure of Citizen Kane. In Citizen Kane, the interviewees are attempting to shed light on an individual--Charles Foster Kane. In Carmen Lies, Dunn's recollection of Carmen's

revealed through the memories of the characters who remain. As in The Usual Suspects, information is discovered through police interrogation of witnesses. Thus, Carmen Lies combines components of all of the above films--the structure of the police interrogation as in The Usual Suspects, the focus on who the protagonist is as in Citizen Kane, and the difficulty of knowing the truth as in Rashomon.

For tone, rather than structure, I referenced Dr. Strangelove and Raising Arizona. Bizarre acts create the ridiculous tone in these films. In Raising Arizona, two characters speed down the road to snag a bag of stolen Huggies on the fly. In Dr. Strangelove, a character rides an hydrogen bomb to his death. In Carmen Lies, characters line up revealing a sea of asses waiting to receive a B-12 shot for stamina. All of these are actions which set an absurd tone. Few would consider speeding down a road searching for stolen diapers, riding an H-bomb, or getting vitamin shots to increase their productivity at work anything but bizarre. Yet, the automotive industry has those working in it who not only take vitamin shots but might consider riding an H-bomb. This devil-may-care attitude in the guise of the laissez-faire capitalism which Big Buford Smalls and the others working at his lot practice is revealed as soul-robbing, and the methods and actions employed by these salesmen are so outrageous that they seem inherently satirical to an outsider. Therefore, I have chosen a satirical tone and form for this screenplay.

Satire has rich traditions in literature, theatre and

film. From Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels and Eugene Ionesco's The Lesson to Stanley Kubrick's Dr. Strangelove, satire has been a tool which authors have used to reveal the illogical, oppressive, or absurd. There has also been a tradition of focusing on business and businessmen in works such as Sinclair Lewis' Main Street and Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman to Robert Zemeckis' Used Cars. In Carmen Lies, I have attempted to do the same: utilize satire not only to explode a night flare over capitalism-gone-amok in an industry that caters to our love of the automobile, but to reveal the character of those who populate this industry. Almost everyone in our culture utilizes a car or truck as a daily means of existence, and most have had the experience of purchasing an automobile at one time or another. The process of the purchase has become a game which few enjoy but most are required to play. In Carmen Lies, I have revealed from the inside a sub-culture which defies the game. Having sold cars, I can vouch that this sub-culture smacks of cultism. Not unlike an economic version of Fascism, this sub-culture is exclusive and secretive. "Those that are with us, are with us," says one axiom in the business; "those that aren't with us are against us." The individual exposed to this mindset is transformed from a normal, morally directed individual to an abnormal, almost sociopathic, money-driven automaton whose individuality, individual morality, and perception of the world become skewed in the chase for the almighty dollar. In short, this subject is ripe for satire. The chief device I have chosen to employ is reductio ad



absurdum. As Gerald Mast states in The Comic Mind (2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, 5-6), The reductio ad absurdum magnifies a "simple human mistake or social question...reducing the action to chaos and the social question to absurdity."

The action in Carmen Lies begins with the biggest one-day sale in history, and ends in the destruction of Hickeyland--a microcosm of the industry and conscienceless capitalism in general. It follows unsympathetic characters, on both sides of the game, through an evening of record sales, explosive commercialism, the control and swindling of customers, and the piece-by-piece destruction of Hickeyland to a final "deal" that applies Big Buford Smalls' ideology to the new "growth industry"--Death. This destruction of Hickeyland parallels the destruction of Carmen the salesman. Carmen the person is required to use the very qualities he has come to despise in himself--manipulation and deceit--to free himself not only physically but spiritually from the prison of Hickeyland. This symbolic destruction of capitalism in microcosm also shows its resiliency and adaptability. It is like the Hydra--cut off a head and two grow in its place. Capitalists like Buford will always adapt. The notions of perceived price points, multiple values, and the age-old component of the system--haggling--are tonic for the capitalist, and outside of the daily experience of most in this society. The necessity for the automobile creates the necessity of participation in this "game," and raises a social question with which almost all



must eventually deal.

The social question--what is a "fair" deal--is absurd itself since few things have intrinsic value, value being a construct of the individual mind. The more obvious questions generated in this game may appear as if they are being begged: are car salesmen nefarious, money-grubbing individuals? On the flip side: are all customers, as Carmen warns Joe Green early on, "lying if their lips are moving"? For the most part these stereotypes hold true, but more importantly they offer insight (because they have become stereotypes) into the greater absurdity--all play the game even though they despise it. The customers and salesmen--because it is human nature to want to win at almost any game played--are forced to descend to a level which reduces human nature to the absurd. The industry, in an attempt to simply get customers to look at their products, has developed the gamesmanship of misleading advertising. But the public soon figures out the tactics and demands an even better deal, requiring the industry to become more creative at its slight of hand in order to gain customers and profit, and the customers slowly learn the tactics again, requiring another change in tactics to maintain profitability, and so on, ad infinitum. The suspicions generated are tolerable for some salesmen, perhaps because they have made this process a game, while these suspicions are almost intolerable for the customers, perhaps because they feel inadequate at playing the game. Carmen has found the game intolerable, and this is apparent in the memories recollected throughout the

screenplay.

These remembrances focus on the day's events with respect to Carmen, the protagonist. The memories of each character--what they choose to recount--provides insight into Carmen, and into the remembering character as well. Preacher, the manager, remembers from the aspect of the business and the deal only. He allows for exposition and views Carmen only from the perspective of a cog in the machine. Similarly, Scatman remembers Carmen only through what kind of trade vehicle he had--again business only. Boom Boom, the Recon manager, is also expositional, and allows suspicion to be cast on Carmen in regard to the bombings. Dunn, the jailed ex-finance man, remembers Carmen not only from the standpoint of his prowess as a salesman, but as a loyal friend. Ben, the gravedigger and the final customer, recollects Carmen as a "nice young man," suggesting Carmen may be more than just a car salesman, and allows for further exposition of the plot. Airbrakes, the new finance man, deals with Carmen on a more formal, yet friendly, level. He seems to be closer to Carmen than the others--he shares beers with him at the strip bar, Vultures. But it is only a surface friendship--they are really only acquaintances by circumstance; besides, Carmen is much too good a car man not to curry favor with the finance department--it is where his work turns into commissions. And finally, C.J. She allows for a deeper inspection of both the person Carmen was before his involvement in the business, as well as the metamorphosis he is currently going through. Carmen's considering quitting

Hickeyland during C.J.'s memory of their evening together shows the changes lurking on the horizon for him. It is also through her memory we can most sympathize with Carmen as a character.

In creating the main and peripherhal characters, I drew upon my experience in the car business, as well as structuring individual characterizations for exposition of both the story and of Carmen. The characters of Boom Boom, Scatman, and Preacher are based upon real people. The car business is filled with ex-military (as well as ex-most everything else). When I was hired, with no experience, the Preacher told me, "Hell, you may be the best car man ever." So, the car business has become a catch-all for almost any disenfranchised individual willing to give up his life for the chance to become "wealthy." Boom Boom is an amalgamation of many of the ex-military people I have met in the business. His work ethic and respectful attitude towards authority are the main qualities the people I have known have shared, and he is a natural for the high-energy confusion of the Recon Department, where his military precision allows for a smooth end game of the sale. Because Boom Boom is drawn as an honest and even-handed individual, his admiration for Carmen allows a reader to believe that Carmen--unlike the stereotypes of the others at the lot--truly is a good person at heart. So, too, are Scatman and Preacher distilled versions of various managers with whom I have worked. Scatman is drawn as one who represents the avarice and gluttony in the industry, and his belief in Carmen's ability

to make a sound decision on the value of Ben's trade shadows the humanity which Boom Boom's admiration suggests. Preacher reveals the psychological position someone in the clutches of this business attains--a total concern only for money--and implies that Carmen may not be so worthwhile as these other characterizations suggest. This allows for an interesting dichotomy: is Carmen really a good guy or just so good at his job he can make us believe he's on our side. The truth of Carmen's character is revealed through his actions with Ben, Granny, Joe Green, and C.J. In delineating each of these characters, I have attempted to distill the essence of what drives them as people as well as to present them in such a way as to have those characterizations be commentative. Managers, by their very nature, are concerned with only one thing--money. During a time of limited production, they have no compunction about "dinking" (firing) someone and replacing them with another cog in the machine. They have decided that this is their life's calling, and will most likely be carried off, feet first, from that final lot. So it is no accident that their memories are jogged by the remembrance of the "deal" Carmen was working.

C.J. is also a character drawn from real life experience. Her qualities of femininity and pathos, veneered with toughness, show the trickle-down effect of exposure to this industry or to someone living in its clutches. Her ability to recount such intimate memories to a total stranger (in her interview with Lt. Kazinsky) is the result of her exposure to Carmen and through him the hardness of the



business. Intimacy is not something readily possible in this industry--like a small town everyone knows your business. It is all part of the psychological control, and control is the most important thing. Control of the salesman, as well as the customer, allows for control of the sale, and subsequently the amount of money made. By giving in to this control, Carmen believes he has lost the best part of himself as he has sunk more deeply into the abyss of "the sale." Yet, C.J. reveals the evolution of Carmen from a lost soul to to one who has reassessed what is truly of value--his relationship with C.J.

Finally, Carmen is a thinly disguised version of me. I experienced some interesting and not always pleasant happenings during my time in the car business, and though it taught me much, it robbed me of much more. This is why Carmen's characterization may be seen as disjointed or fractured. The gravity of success and the feelings of power it engenders are heady and difficult to escape. Carmen helps Green, the young salesman, without hesitation, empathizing with his plight of having to sing in front of nearly one hundred strangers. He "gives" Ben the car at the inception of the film, in essence scamming the lot and, by proxy, himself. He has de-evolved into something he has seen and found distasteful, and through his altruistic actions begins a growth which evolves with each successive explosion, until he emerges from the rubble of the lot, and the rubble his life has become, damaged yet once again whole. By using the instincts he has developed in the business against the

business, he is able to escape its grip.

The remaining characters are sculpted as not much more than window dressing. They function almost totally on the expositional plane, as devices to hold the story together; thus, they are vanilla, straight, and for the most part, uninteresting.

The music in Carmen Lies is intended to be commentative. I have decided not to include a great number of musical suggestions opting for just a few key choices. The pieces I have chosen--"God Money," by Nine Inch Nails; "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good," by Nina Simone; "Crazy," by Patsy Cline; "Happy Trails," by Van Halen--comment on character or action at a critical time. "God Money," the first of these, is used to underscore the emotional conflict Carmen is feeling during his discussion of the business with the "greenpea," Joe Green. Carmen has, for months, brooded over the hollow feeling that resides inside of him, and though he teaches Green the ropes willingly, he throws in warnings--"[T]hey'll dip you in the grease and drive the bus over you quicker than they can snake you," or they will get you into trouble and steal from you. Yet, it is still uncertain if he can give up his worship of "God Money." "Crazy" sets the tone of the lot--Country--and allows for play with the stereotype of the horsetrader and the ignorant hick. "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good" comments on Carmen's state of mind on this final drive. Part of him wants to continue the economically prolific enterprise of selling, but another part of him has grown weary of the

games, childishness and absurdity of the lifestyle. In addition, since having to choose between C.J. and what he had rightfully earned, he has re-evaluated what is important in his life. He's got it bad--for C.J.--and that ain't good--economically speaking. This song also foreshadows Ben's impending purchase--he has been hooked by the best the system has produced for getting a sale. He's got it bad for the Dynasty and, if not for the changed Carmen, that ain't good--for Ben's wallet.

"Happy Trails" has a simpler message. It is my parting shot to an industry which I no longer desire any part of, and functions tonally in the absurd--the place to which this film has indeed de-evolved. The strains of "Bomba dida, Bomba dida" after the final bombing heighten the absurdity and are intended as hilarity. They close the film with one way of "dealing" with this problem.

Carmen Lies is by no means an epic film on the level of a Rashomon or a Citizen Kane, nor was it intended as such. The subject matter (along with my own view of the industry) necessarily required that this treatment be sophomoric at times and absurd overall. I have tried, like a locomotive building speed, to have the piece move from the realm of normal, yet odd, to an almost unthinking absurdity, because this pattern mimics the effects the business has on those who come to it. It can brainwash all--from the most ignorant to the most informed. It is an intriguing sub-culture from which I have returned, certainly not unscathed, but enlightened, and one which makes for an interesting screenplay.



## CARMEN LIES

FADE TO BLACK:

A VOICE breaks the darkness.

MAN  
(Off)  
Carmen Lies.

2ND MAN  
(Off)  
Really?

MAN  
(Off)  
Yessir.

2ND MAN  
(off)  
So, if the lips are moving...

MAN  
(Off)  
They're lying...1 zero.

2ND MAN  
(Off)  
1 zero?

MAN  
(Off)  
1 zero...

2ND MAN  
3 zeroes...Carmen, what's a  
donk?

CARMEN  
5 zeroes. O.K., Green, listen  
up. I'm going to translate for  
you...you got a short-time,  
bogue roadkill in a donk at 11  
o'clock 2 pounds hooked. You  
get the word from the eye in the

CARMEN

(cont.)

sky, up him and find out he's had a B.K., zero downstroke, ratted out his student loans, and wants 250 a month. You walk-around, bury his face in the paint, spin him, toss him in the box, hit him with an atomic pencil, close him, write him up and dump him in finance after planting a warranty.

GREEN

Hang on a second...5? zeroes? Could we do this for less than a hundred?

CARMEN

Yessir. 5. Nosir, less than a hunsky ain't money. Now, what'd I say?

GREEN

I don't know, that's why I'm asking. I graduated with a degree in English, not carspeak.

CARMEN

A guy with less than six months job time who doesn't pay his bills parks his trade off the lot. It's an old beater he owes 2 thousand dollars more on than it's worth. The video camera spots him, radios Stubby, who points him out. You go and meet and greet him, and during your investigation find out he filed bankruptcy, hasn't paid his student loans, has no money to put down, and wants a 250 a month payment. You lead him to the car that will get him close to 250, show it to him, get him to like it, take a demo drive, and sit him down. You see?

GREEN

Oh...that's simple enough. 6

GREEN

(cont.)

zeroes. How am I supposed to remember all that?

CARMEN

You're smart...you'll pick it up. I call.

GREEN

You call? I got 4 zeroes. You lose.

CARMEN

No, my little greenpea, I win. I only got 1 zero...I lied.

GREEN

You're kidding. But why would you bid 5 if you only had 1?

CARMEN

That's why they call it liar's poker...you'll pick that up, too.

INT RESTROOM DAY

A FLUSHING TOILET cries out, ending in a whimpering gurgle. CARMEN LIES is in his 30's, with a mop of brown hair and a crooked smile. He and a new salesman, JOE GREEN, 20's and almost a carbon copy of Carmen, stand preening in front of the mirror. Above their heads is a SIGN--"WASH your hands. AFTER you go. BEFORE you leave." The words BEFORE and AFTER hover above JOE'S and CARMEN'S heads, respectively.

GREEN

(handing him a hundred)

Here. Now I'm broke.

CARMEN

Not for long, buddy. You can make more money in this business than you ever dreamed of. I made 12 grand last month...

Strains of Nine Inch Nails' "Head Like A Hole."

GREEN

12 thousand? Dollars? How?

CARMEN

S.O.M. (pause) Salesman of the Month...

GREEN

Wow, 12 thousand?

CARMEN

All you gotta do is eat, sleep and breathe cars. You think you can work 90 hours a week?

GREEN

90? I heard this place was built on an old prison, but jeez...

CARMEN

Like the ex-cons working here, you'd better learn how to do the time...

GREEN

Jesus!

CARMEN

He can't help you here, buddy. If he can't help get a deal bought, he ain't worth squirt. Stay away from the guys around here, they're all sharks and they'll dip you in the grease and drive the bus over ya quicker than they can snake ya...

GREEN

Dip me in the bus? Wha...?

CARMEN

(interrupting)

Get you into trouble with the boss and steal deals from you.

GREEN

If this place is so bad, why are you still here?

CARMEN

Good question, buddy, good question...Hey!

Green leaves the room, turning the light out on Carmen. Carmen finishes preparing himself, speaking to himself, in the dark. The music builds as the black screen begins to take on an

almost WATERY quality. On the lyric "God Money" a TWINKLE of light appears center screen.

CARMEN

Well, C.J., one more missed anniversary. One more 100 hour week. Why do I stay in this business? I never see you, Buford's a thief, and I'm turning into...into...ahhh! What do you think, Ben?

BEN gets a twinkle in his eye. Carmen picks up the bill. Carmen looks into the mirror for a long moment, barely lighted by the luminescence of the bill, his eyes void of any "twinkle," almost lifeless.

CARMEN

Thought so...let's go, buddy...

Carmen pockets the bill and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INT MEETING ROOM MORNING

Patsy Cline's "Crazy" blares out over the P.A. system.

A sea of ASSES. For as far as the eye can see--asses.

SALESMEN stand in line waiting, pants down, for a shot from a NURSE in front of which are CARMEN and GREEN.

CARMEN

Hey, Kitty, you're looking sharp today.

KITTY

(holding up needle)  
Not as sharp as baby, here. You ready for today?

CARMEN

Yessir. I'm going to kick some butt...

KITTY

(sticking him with needle)  
And I'm going to stick some butts.

She sticks him with the needle somewhat brusquely and they chuckle at her joke.

CARMEN

Ow! I just love your gentle way,  
Kitty, but I sure hate being the butt  
of your jokes.

KITTY

But you're such a nice butt of my  
jokes. You still seeing that girl?

CARMEN

Yessir. But the second she leaves  
I'll go straight to a phone and call  
you. Go easy on Green here, ok?  
He's a virgin.

KITTY

Oh, I'll be gentle...well, c'mon  
Sugar, it's just a pinch.

She pinches Carmen on the butt and winks. Green steps up  
timidly clutching his unzipped pants tightly.

CARMEN

C'mon, Green, she's a pussycat.

GREEN

Easy for you to say.

CARMEN

I've got to talk to Buford, so I'll  
see you outside, ok?

GREEN

If I can still walk after this.

KITTY

Come to Kitty. (purrs)

CARMEN

If she starts to rub up against you,  
watch out.

KITTY

Now, now, you know Kitty's soft and  
warm and cuddly.

GREEN

(apologetically)  
I'm allergic to cats...

Carmen walks off as Kitty pulls another needle out and motions to Green. Green looks worried.

EXT LOT MORNING

Carmen and Green walk past a small guard shack at the front of the lot covered in 4th of July bunting. The entire lot is covered in bunting and balloons, a handful of which Green carries.

A BEIGE F-150, a PICKUP, is stopped at the front gate. Green questions Carmen again.

GREEN

That was too weird.

CARMEN

Yea, well, there's a lot of weirdness in the car bidness...you'll get used to it.

GREEN

What's that guy doing?

CARMEN

Stubby's turning him.

GREEN

Turning?

CARMEN

Yea. When you can't get someone locked down on price, Preacher will walk them, then Stubby's job is to turn them...get them to come back in and deal...

GREEN

Oh. Carmen, I heard a rumor about keys...

CARMEN

It's true. If you get a real tough asshole, you roof his keys. He can't leave, so he has to buy...see up there?

As they pass the showroom, Green looks up to see a metal MOUNTAIN on the roof.



GREEN

Wow. That's pretty harsh.

CARMEN

Yessir. When they hit this lot, they stay here until they buy or die...

GREEN

Like some of the cars here, huh?

CARMEN

Yessir. Did you see the little old lady that just went in the showroom?

GREEN

Yea...

CARMEN

I sold her the trade. It was a piece of shit, but Scatman mystery oiled it...

GREEN

Mystery oiled?

CARMEN

I found that out the hard way. It's what Scatman puts in turds with bad rings so they won't smoke...so they'll sell. I had to help her find a cheap mechanic to replace her engine not a month later. I've hated Preacher ever since...

GREEN

Wow. So, when will it pick up?

CARMEN

In the afternoon. And by this evening, you'll be glad for Kitty's shot...we'll be hammered.

DISSLOVE TO:

EXT LOT LATE MORNING

The lot is sparsely populated with customers. A school of SALESMEN stand near the front entrance playing liar's poker, pitching and flipping quarters, and playing grab-ass. The BEIGE 1-TON sits at the front gate again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT LOT AFTERNOON

Traffic has picked up and the customers roam around the lot like a brigade of ants which has discovered a food stash. Only a few salesmen remain at the front gate still flipping quarters, as the BEIGE 1-TON pulls up to and stops. CARMEN and CJ COY, a beautiful, stunning, tall redhead, sit at a table under a weather awning at the front gate in heated conversation.

CJ

My immediate impulse is to say "Fuck You" for not getting off on this one day which I specifically requested you get off for.

CARMEN

Honey, you know I couldn't get off today, with the sale and everything.

CJ

But it's our anniversary!

CARMEN

I know, sweetheart. I tried, honest I did. I practically begged Buford...

CJ

Yea. Like I haven't heard that before...

CARMEN

Look, I promise you after this evening you won't have to worry about me missing our anniversary ever again.

CJ

There may not be an anniversary to miss after today.

CARMEN

Honey!

CJ storms off as Carmen frustratedly watches her go.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT LOT DUSK

The lot is jammed. Customers are everywhere and salesmen are outnumbered. The atmosphere is electric. The BEIGE 1-TON passes by one salesman who has just gone back on post at the front gate after a sale.

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT INSERT

The MUSIC being piped over the P.A. system is interrupted by a rapid fire succession of PHONE TONES which drown out the music and sound suspiciously like MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB. A "PAGE" is heard over a P.A. system.

CUT TO:

A MOUTH filled with a set of obviously FALSE TEETH.

VO

That's right folks, we just  
soooooooooooooooooooooooooold another  
one!

CUT TO:

EXT NIGHT LOW ANGLE

A BLACK DYNASTY pulls into the lot over a menacing set of TIRE SPIKES designed to let one in but not out. Right behind the Dynasty a BLACK PICK-UP with oversized tires follows passing a WELCOME sign on a pole. We follow the pole up, past a SPEAKER, to a SIGN--"HICKEYLAND, NEW AND USED CARS." Above it sits a screaming COWBOY caricature next to which, wafting in the wind and suspended by a CRANE, hangs a MOBILE HOME. The SPEAKER crackles out the gravelly voice.

CUT TO:

EXT A SPEAKER NIGHT

VO

Hickeyland would like to thank Mr.  
and Mrs. Pigeon...

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON

Another SPEAKER hangs from a LIGHT POLE blaring out the page.

Below, a substantial crowd has gathered around a ring of lights surrounding a BRIGHT YELLOW PICK-UP. Scrawled across the side in huge letters is "The Competition." A pyrotechnics crew is crawling around the truck, making last-minute adjustments. News crews are setting up for coverage as the crowd buzzes with anticipation.

VO  
 ...for their purchase  
 of a brand new 1 ton pickup.

CUT TO:

EXT LOW ANGLE NIGHT

The BLACK TRUCK pulls under a TENT. Reflected in its dark, tinted windows is the logo of a RADIO STATION REMOTE VAN--KFUK. The truck parks next to A SIGN which reads "SOLD UNITS ONLY."

CUT TO:

An expensive-looking BOOT steps out of the truck.

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM NIGHT

CU An unsmiling mouth.

VO  
 Thank ya folks for shoppin' the  
 world's number 1 dealer...  
 Hickeyland!!!

The mouth full of FALSE TEETH finishes the page. This is PREACHER, the General Sales Manager or GSM. He is a gaunt man, unsmiling, in his 50's, though one could argue he is much older. Dressed in a tropical island white cotton suit and a flowery shirt, he is surrounded by stacks of paper and applications, pep pills, and packets of vitamins as well as a box of powdered donuts which he uses to hide evidence of his cocaine use.

A CREDIT MACHINE behind him is spitting out reams of paper--credit reports on the masses who sit amidst the SMOKE and BLARING MUSIC being piped into the showroom. There is a surreal quality to the light and the atmosphere, almost as if time has stopped. It is not possible inside this sanctuary to tell if it is night or day. The GLASS surrounding the

showroom is painted with all manner of come-ons--DEMO SALE; REBATES; FREE WARRANTY; CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS #1; INDEPENDENCE DAY BLOW OUT, etc. All line the windows blocking out the outside world.

CUT TO:

The VAN reflected in the TINTED WINDOWS of the truck.

VOICE OVER RADIO SPOT

VO

That's right, folks, we're gonna be "Crazy" here at Hickeyland the rest of the evening...there's still time for you to come on down and take advantage of this record-breaking sale day. We've already broken the single day's sales record of over two hundred units from retail in a single day and the price slashing goes on until the last deal is done. We'll be giving away a brand new \$60,000 Dodge Viper after the firework show. And, hey, we're even gonna blow up a truck for a new television ad campaign...so come on down, see the commercial and the fireworks and enter for the drawing for the new Dodge Viper...only here at Hickeyland!

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

Hundreds of SALESMEN and CUSTOMERS are gathered around tables in the showroom laughing and talking. The showroom is bustling with activity--salesmen walking back and forth between a small raised area at the front of the showroom which has the words "THE TOWER" painted on its glass wall, in which Preacher sits. An overweight SALESMAN, MOBY, early 40's, wears clothes which don't fit quite right, making him look disheveled. He stands at the tower, talking to Preacher.

Over Moby's shoulder, we see the BOOT ascending a staircase in the middle of the showroom.

MOBY

(arrogant)

But we need to be at 450 a month,  
Preacher. I sold this guy this turd  
last year and I'm certain Scatman can  
put another 500 in it so we can make  
this deal. Call him...

PREACHER

Allright, but another nickel is all  
you're gonna get...hang on...  
Scatman, you got your ears on?

CUT TO:

EXT APPRAISAL TENT NIGHT

A number of salesman are milling around a makeshift looking parking lot around the tent. A late model LINCOLN pulls under the tent and out steps SCATMAN. A large black man fond of sweets, he shuffles to a nearby table and reaches into a large box of BABY RUTHS, takes one out, shucks it and stuffs it between his puffy lips while making a notation on a small sheet of paper.

SCATMAN

(handing over paper)

Here, get this one, you hear me?  
This one's the shit! I need a new  
demo...all these foreign cars too  
damn small.

YOUNG SALESMAN

Yessir.

The radio sitting on the table near the candy box SCREECHES again.

PREACHER (VO)

Scatman, you workin' or raidin' the  
candy machine again, you fat  
bastard...come back...

SCATMAN

(into radio)

C'mon you skinny little white fuck...

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

PREACHER

Yea, Scat, the 92 F-150 you looked at  
for Moby...will it do another nickel?

SCATMAN (VO)

I don' know, boss, it's a pretty rugged  
ol' turd...springs is busted...

PREACHER

Well, I need it...

SCATMAN (VO)

Awright, but we gonna have shit  
sittin' roun' here for months at the  
rate we a goin'...

PREACHER

Thanks, buddy...

(to Moby)

Now lock this cocksucker down...

MOBY

She's a cocksucker, alright...  
blew me good when I sold him that  
turd...I'll go jam this down his  
throat...then I'll jam a little  
something down hers...

PREACHER

Little is right. You know the  
rules...no tail before the sale...

Preacher fills out a deal sheet which we see from above. He lines out the figures and enters the profit on the back of the sheet. From PREACHER'S POV we see through the glass door of the showroom the expensive BOOT framed, standing next to the BLACK TRUCK. Preacher finishes lining out the figures. The "gross" figure--3666--is outlined as if electrified and a BELL goes off like the end of a prizefight.

CUT TO:

EXT FRONT LOT NIGHT

The BLACK TRUCK squeals out and runs through the arm of the front control gate, almost running over the guard, and disappearing into the night.

CUT TO:



INT SHOWROOM

A PHONE on Preacher's desk rings.

CUT TO:

INT BUFORD'S OFFICE FROM BEHIND

BUFORD'S OFFICE is gaudy beyond belief. Mounted head of BOAR, ELK, and BEAR, some of them fake, line the walls. A large poster-sized picture of Buford is behind his desk, which is overly ornate and too large for the smallish office, along with some old style mechanics' calendars with semi-nude women splayed out on the hoods of cars. In front of his desk is a series of security T.V.'s, with angles on almost all the lot. Buford's HAND reaches for a container by the phone, dips in a silver spoon, and pulls out a spoonful of white powder. A loud SNORT precedes:

BUFORD

(into phone)

Goddamnit, Preacher! Some Sumbitch just left a package by my door while I was drainin' the lizard. Hell, it coulda bin a bomb...

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

PREACHER

(answering phone on desk)

Yea, Boss...yea, they plowed the gate. I'll get Boom Boom on it. 30 minutes? Yea, we'll be ready when you are...

Preacher hangs up the phone and grabs his radio.

PREACHER

(cont.)

Boom Boom, you got a copy?

CUT TO:

INT WASHBAY NIGHT

BOOM BOOM, a black man in his forties, is dressed in army fatigues. He stands in a washbay amidst the furious activity of cars being washed and vacuumed. He runs the RECON department, where all cars go before delivery, as well as

being the Jack-of-all-trades for the lot.

BOOM BOOM  
Boom Boom here, sir...

PREACHER (VO)  
Boom Boom, the front gate's been run down again. Can you grab a spare and get it on? I don't want these friggin' newscrews filming a busted gate...

BOOM BOOM  
10-4, sir. Consider it done...

Boom Boom holsters the radio and walks towards a small SHED behind Recon. He opens it and enters, revealing dozens of GATE ARMS. He grabs one and exits with the long, tapering GATE ARM, places it in a GOLF CART next to the shed, and speeds off into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT BACKLOT

Boom Boom rounds a corner and heads down a long aisle between hundreds of trucks of all kinds. He passes the lighted area where the commercial shoot is being set up.

A sparse CROWD is milling around, beginning to form. LIGHTS for filming are set up strategically with an old PICK-UP in the center of the set up. A CRANE sets back from the circle with a line running from the crane to the pick-up.

A NEW CAR pulls into the foreground, passing Boom Boom and driving ahead of him to the check point at the front of the dealership. A SMALL MAN struggles to pick up the shattered gate. As the new car stops at the gate, he tosses the splintered wood aside, pulls a palm-sized computer with a scanner gun attached from a hip holster, and scans a computer barcode sticker on the windshield of the car.

STUBBY  
(muttering under his breath)  
Goddamn Son of a Bitch.  
Bastards runnin down the gate,  
I oughta get hazard duty pay...  
move those damn spikes over here,  
motherfuckers...

As the NEW CAR pulls forward it is cut off by a parts SEMI pulling in. BUSCOTTI TRUCKING is emblazoned on the side of the SEMI. The car dodges the truck, its BLINKER flashes, and it speeds off into the blackness.

CUT TO:

EXT LOT NIGHT MOMENTS LATER

BOOM BOOM stops his cart and speaks to the driver.

BOOM BOOM

Hey, Jimmy. How's it going?

JIMMY

Doin' fine. Got a delivery, tonite...

BOOM BOOM

Well, the tires are in the parts bay. Drop off your delivery and get those tires in as quick as you can...we're shooting a commercial in about 30 minutes...

JIMMY

You got it, pally...

CUT TO:

EXT FRONT LOT

STUBBY

(on radio)

Preacher, you got a copy?

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

PREACHER

Come back...

STUBBY (VO)

That new gate comin'?

PREACHER

Boom Boom's on the way...

STUBBY (VO)  
10-4...I see him now.

A LINE OF SALESMEN stand in the window in front of Preacher's desk. PREACHER spins in his chair and rips a credit report from the computer behind him and rolls back to his desk. JOE GREEN stands at the head of the line waiting for Preacher to pencil his deal.

PREACHER  
Whatdya got here, kid?

GREEN  
Mr. and Mrs Thomas. Boy, are they smart! He's a college professor at State university and she's studying to be a teacher. She's gonna teach Special Ed...

PREACHER  
(interrupting)  
Just give me the baby, son... what're we trying to buy?

GREEN  
The Intrepid...the green demo.

PREACHER  
(still looking at credit report)  
Yea? Well Mr. and Mrs. College Professor had a BK two years ago...let's see...620 beacon... mortgage is good...no car credit ...this guy got a trade?

GREEN  
Yessir...a 92 Accord...

PREACHER  
He own it?

GREEN  
Yessir. He said he's had it appraised at 2500...

PREACHER  
Lucky for him it's worth 3000... but he's only gettin' 1500. This guy's just two steps above bogue...you got any cash down?

GREEN

They said they can come up with  
500...and he said he wants 100 over  
invoice...

PREACHER

We'll be happy to sell him the  
Intrepid for 100 over, if he doesn't  
mind if we steal 15 hun from the  
trade...you got his trade keys?

Green hands him the trade keys. Preacher puts them in a PILE  
OF KEYS on his desk, and picks up the phone.

PREACHER

(cont.)

Al Stanky to the tower...Al "banana"  
Stanky new car tower...  
(hands Green sheet of paper)  
I want you to get 4000 down... that's  
the only way we'll get 'im bought...

Green looks a little terrified. CARMEN steps up from behind  
him, into the window. Green remains, not sure what to do.

PREACHER

Whatdya got, Carmen?

CARMEN

Roadkill. Demo'd and committed.  
Here's the appraisal.

(to Green)

Look, kid, tell this guy that because  
of his BK, the bank would normally  
ask for a third down, but because of  
the sale and our buying power, we can  
get him done with just 4000, OK?

GREEN

(still scared)

Ok...What's a "roadkill?"

CARMEN

Someone who parks off the lot so they  
won't have to talk to anyone...now  
act excited, OK? This is the best  
deal you've seen since you've been  
here...

GREEN  
 (bolder now)  
 OK...Thanks!

Green skips off. AL STANKY, lot porter, young and not too bright, enters the showroom. A huge dip of Copenhagen fills his lower lip, giving him an apish quality.

PREACHER  
 (handing him pile of keys)  
 Roof 'em... (to Carmen)  
 Where's this guy's credit?

STANKY steps outside, stands behind a painted section of window that reads "CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS #1." Through the window, from Preacher's P.O.V., we can see him. One by one, he throws sets of keys on the roof, then disappears.

CARMEN  
 Here.

PREACHER  
 What's he do for a living?

CARMEN  
 Gravedigger. Across the street at Franklin's.

PREACHER  
 No shit? (reads file) Ben Franklin?  
 Where is this guy?

CARMEN  
 Over there...

BEN sits at a table drinking coffee, in awe of the mass of humanity in the showroom. He looks strikingly LIKE Ben Franklin on a one hundred dollar bill.

PREACHER  
 Well, I'll be a Sonofabitch. He looks just like 'im. My favorite Prez...except for Woodrow...So, what's ol' Ben buying tonite?

CARMEN  
 Dynasty. I got 2 dimes for the trade...

## PREACHER

Since you're gonna need some  
 traveling cash for Vegas, what say I  
 give ol' Ben a real atomic  
 pencil...rip his head smooth off.  
 (scribbles some figures on the sheet)  
 let's do bidness...

Carmen wades through the tables, full of customers and  
 salesmen making deals. The activity is intense. He walks  
 past Moby's table, where things aren't going so well.  
 Moby is arguing with WILLIE, his not-so-willing customer.

CUT TO:

EXT LOT NIGHT

Willie storms out the door, followed closely by Moby. As  
 they exit, Moby stops and pulls something from his pocket and  
 throws it on the roof of the showroom.

WILLIE

(spinning around ferociously)  
 Where the hell is my truck? Where  
 are my keys, you lying bastard?

MOBY

Now, Willie, you know you want this  
 truck. C'mon back in here and I  
 promise you 450 a month, OK, buddy?

WILLIE

Look, "buddy." We bin here all day  
 and we're tired. Why the hell are you  
 promising me 450 a month when you  
 just told me 459? You guys are just  
 trying to screw me, damnit. WHERE  
 THE HELL IS MY TRUCK AND MY KEYS????

Willie spins on his heels, still talking.

WILLIE

(cont.)

I got news for you, asshole, I got a  
 spare set and we're getting out of  
 this shithole. C'mon, Vicki....

Willie storms off. Vicki gives Moby a sad little look as she  
 is backing off, following Willie. Moby smiles, turns, and  
 heads back into the showroom.

CUT TO:

INT FINANCE OFFICE

AIRBRAKES, 30's, a finance guy, is dressed in a tie and crisp, expensive looking shirt. His black hair slicked back, his ears stick out like a set of--well--airbrakes, hence the name. He sits behind a desk and a computer, papers all around and shelves to the ceiling with all manner of forms. The computer is ZIPPING out a form. GRANNY sits in the chair across from him, not too happy.

GRANNY

I told you, young man, I can't afford another twenty dollars a month!

AIRBRAKES

I'll tell you what...because of the trouble you had with your last car, I really don't feel comfortable letting you leave here without this coverage. Let me go talk to my boss, and see what I can do, OK?

GRANNY

OK, but I'm not going to pay another twenty dollars a month. You tell your boss that. You folks sold me that lemmon last time, so it's your fault my credit got messed up. If you had to put a new engine in a car a month after you bought it, you'd miss some payments, too, especially if you had to live on Social Security!

AIRBRAKES

You're absolutely right, Mrs. Humphrey, that's why I want to make sure you don't have that problem again.

Airbrakes leaves.

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM NIGHT

PREACHER

Goddamnit, Moby, I thought you had that cocksucker locked down. What



PREACHER  
(cont.)

happened...?

MOBY

I tried for a 9 dollar bump. Call Stubby and turn him...We'll get him, boss...

PREACHER  
(on radio)

Stubby, you got a copy?

STUBBY (VO)

I got a Goddamn croppie, come back...

PREACHER

Got a beige 1 ton comin' out, again...turn 'im.

STUBBY (VO)

10-4...I'm tellin you, Preacher, I'm gonna move those damn spikes over here...Sonofabitch damn near ran me down...

PREACHER

Don't worry about it...just turn the fuckin 1 ton...(to Moby)  
Why didn't you roof 'im?

MOBY

Spare set...

PREACHER

Fucking hicks...

CUT TO:

EXT BACKLOT NIGHT

A MIDGET, dressed in cowboy garb with a cowboy hat 3 times the size of his overly large head, is doing a sound check. BIG BUFORD SMALLS, owner of the dealership, looks like a life-sized version of the caricature of the screaming cowboy which looms over the lot. Buford is, after all, a fairly large midget. Buford's oversized gold cowboy belt buckle looks almost like a shield. The letters BS, encrusted in rhinestone, reflect the lights blindingly. Behind him,

perched on a staired platform, sits a new Dodge Viper. Buford pulls out a huge cigar and lights it.

BUFORD

Test, test...is this thing on?  
 (the mic kicks in with a SCREECH)  
 ...Hello...Oh, hey folks, how ya'll doin' tonite? We here at Hickeyland, thanks to YOUR support, have been blowin' the competition away for years, and tonite we're gonna do it again. We also would like to thank you for the world's record for retail car sales in one day--227! For all of you loyal customers and you new ones too, we say a big ol' "Thank You." This here cigar is just the beginning of the celebration cause we're gonna show that appreciation to one lucky customer after the fireworks here. Heck, we're even gonna have more fireworks afterwards.

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

AIRBRAKES runs into the tower and sits behind Preacher. He has a customer file and looks pained.

AIRBRAKES

(to Preacher)

How the hell am I supposed to get this bitch bought.

PREACHER

Who?

AIRBRAKES

This Humphrey bitch--"Granny."  
 Jesus, she can whine. Says we sold her the trade and it had to have a new engine a month later. (smirking)  
 Do these people think these things run forever?

PREACHER

Just give me the baby.

AIRBRAKES

I've got so much overcarry here, I need two co-x's...

PREACHER

Look, numnuts, fax over an invoice for an ES model, that'll cover 2 grand of the overcarry and then package it with 3 A paper deals...they take one they take em all. Try Tony over at National...he owes us one.

AIRBRAKES

Can't do that boss...V.I.N #'s are different...they'd catch it.

(a realization)

Hey! I can put a 1995 warranty on here and suck up 15 hun of the overcarry. Soft money don't count, right? Then I'm carrying 25 hun over and that'll be right at 110%! Plus. I already got a 5 dollar bump so I can get Credit Life and A and H, too! I'll show this ol' bitch...

Airbrakes and Preacher HIGH FIVE and LAUGH heartily, like they've just won the lottery.

PREACHER

Now you're thinkin', shithead. Get these people movin'...you're starting to back up and fuck up the deals we're workin' now...and start paging!

Airbrakes leaves the tower.

CUT TO:

INT AIRBRAKES' OFFICE

Granny sits quietly, fuming. CARMEN walks by and recognizes her.

CARMEN

Mrs. Humphrey?

GRANNY

Yes?

CARMEN

Carmen? I sold you a car about a year ago?

GRANNY

Yes, I remember. The engine blew up a month after I bought it. That's why I'm here now.

CARMEN

I'm sorry to hear that, Mrs. Humphrey. I'll tell you what, when Airbrakes gets back, don't let him sell you a warranty for more than 995, O.K.? Don't tell him I said anything, but you can get it for that, so just hold out...

GRANNY

Why would you tell me...

CARMEN

(interrupting)

Look, Airbrakes is coming. Let's just say I've had a change of heart, O.K.? Remember, 995.

Carmen disappears into the hallway, just as Airbrakes arrives.

GRANNY

(to Airbrakes)

Sonny, I think we need to talk...

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

KELLY RICH, 20's, attractive, female salesperson, stops CARMEN as he walks through the showroom.

KELLY

Hey, Studley, when are you going to make an honest woman out of me?

CARMEN

Kelly Rich...you minx. I don't think I've got it in me...besides, it's C.J.'s and my anniversary...

KELLY

Oh, that sucks. You gonna see her after the big bang?

CARMEN

Yea, we're having a quiet dinner later...whatdya working?

KELLY

I got a real sucker...he's 2 pounds rightside up on his trade and I've convinced him he's 2 pounds hooked...it'll be about a 4 pounder when all's said and done...

CARMEN

Good for you. I gotta go. I'm finishing an important one myself.

KELLY

Well, if you change your mind, you know who to call...

CARMEN

The little RICH girl?

KELLY

You bet your ass....

Carmen heads for the door to the showroom as a page starts over the PA.

VO

That's right folks, we just soooooooooold another one...

CUT TO:

EXT BACKLOT

A PA SPEAKER blaers out the page.

VO

We'd like to thank the Sucker family for their purchase of a new Neon. Thank ya folks, for shopping the world's number 1 dealer...Hickeyland.

Buford is finally going up in the crane and prepares for the "shoot." In the BACK OF THE BUILDING, silhouetted by the

lights, sits CARMEN. He is smoking a handrolled "cigarette" by himself.

CARMEN

I wish you could be here, CJ. I'm so tired of the shit that goes on around here...having to be away from you for this. (he reaches into his pocket for his lighter and out falls a one hundred dollar bill, which he quickly picks up) Can't even share the 4th with you...our anniversary. Well, honey, this is the last anniversary I miss because of this place. (Sets the bill under a pop bottle) So, It's you or CJ, huh? Can't have both...

The crowd applause begins to crescendo with the music.

CARMEN

So, Buford...can't take CJ with me to Vegas and if I don't go, I'm dinked? Well, I got news for you, my stubby friend, I'm spinning out of here. This shit ain't worth it anymore.

Carmen lights a long FUSE CORD, illuminating "BEN" on the 100 dollar bill as it burns.

The fuse CORD BURNS.

The MUSIC CRESCENDOES.

BUFORD

We bin blowin' away the competition for years now, and tonite I get the honor of firin' this here bazooka at the "Competition." And after we're finished with the competition we'll have the drawing for this beautiful new Dodge Viper here behind me. So, without further adoo, let's do some bidness.

In time with the CRASHING MUSIC, Carmen's bottlerocket goes off, heading straight for BUFORD in the crane basket and, in time with the CRASHING MUSIC, hits Buford right in the BELT BUCKLE. Buford reacts.

BUFORD

(cont.)

What the...? Guess one of the little one's is gettin a head start on me there.

The crowd politely applauds and chuckles, some getting a little rowdy waiting for the CRANE BASKET as it is lifted high in the air. Buford takes aim on the truck, pulls the trigger, and a FLASH trails down a line suspended between the crane and the truck. The TRUCK EXPLODES in Hollywood splendor, arching 15 to 20 feet in the air before crashing to the ground in a pile of twisted, burning metal. The crowd applauds and hoots its pleasure at the show.

BUFORD

Now that's the way to blow away the competition! (crowd applauds)  
Folks, in honor of the Fourth of July and the record breaking day we've had, we here at Hickeyland have arranged for a little "family entertainment" before we have the drawing for this beautiful new car. It's families that's responsible for our success, and it's families we take care of. So, if you'll just turn around, we've prepared a little light show in honor of the holiday.

The crowd turns and in the very back of the lot a FIREWORKS DISPLAY begins. The Star-Spangled Banner begins piping over the PA system and the rockets begin their red glare. The show continues on, with all excitedly involved, as Buford imperiously surveys the scene from the crane where he puffs incessantly on his huge stogie.

In the reflection of the "rockets' red glare" we see CARMEN light another FUSE.

CARMEN

And I got a little bit bigger surprise for you...

Five or six bottle rockets fly towards Buford. As he is hit by some, he brushes at his buckle and crotch, dancing a jig.

BUFORD

(under his breath)

Sonuvabitch!

Carmen smiles, takes another hit, and bends down. The 100 dollar bill on the ground takes on a surreal quality in the lights of the firework show.

MCU CARMEN'S FACE

CU 100 DOLLAR BILL

CU CARMEN'S EYES REDDENED BY THE "SMOKE"

CU "BEN'S" EYES TWINKLING

Suddenly "Ben" speaks.

"BEN"

Let's do bidness...

Carmen bends down, lights one more FUSE, picks up the 100 dollar bill, and backs slowly between the trucks.

The FUSE CORD BURNS.

The ever-louder MUSIC CRESCENDOES.

The CROWD APPLAUDS more intensely.

The "BOMBS BURSTING IN AIR..."

A series of EXPLOSIONS rocks the building sitting in back of the dealership.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF SHOTS

LONG SHOT OF DEALERSHIP; MEDIUM SHOT OVERLOOKING THE CROWD RUNNING PANICKED; THE PRECARIOUSLY PLACED VIPER, ITS REAR END ON FIRE, ROLLS DOWN THE STAIRS IN SLOW MOTION CRASHING INTO A BABY CARRIAGE AND EXPLODES; BUFORD'S FACE IN AGONY; STUBBY DIVES FOR THE DOOR OF THE GUARD SHACK DODGING THE BEIGE F-150 ROLLING BY AFLAME; A WOMAN BLOWN BACKWARDS; BUFORD BEING SHOT OUT OF THE CRANE BASKET; THE CARICATURE OVERLOOKING THE LOT LOOKS ASTONISHED; THE CRANE CRASHING INTO THE CIRCLE WHERE THE LIGHTS ONCE STOOD; THE CARICATURE COWBOY HIDES HIS EYES; BLACKNESS.

CUT TO:

EXT FRONT LOT NIGHT



SOUND OF SIRENS in the distance. A newswoman, MISTY AIRES crouching from the force of the blast, stands, a bit wobbly, and tries to gather her composure.

MISTY  
 (to cameraman)  
 Cammy, Cammy! Are you OK?  
 (coughing)  
 Are we on? Can we get on?  
 Get me on the Goddamn air, now!

The sky begins to hail down thousands of keys. It seems that one of the seven plagues of Egypt has suddenly struck the lot.

EXT ROOF OF SHOWROOM JUST AFTER EXPLOSION

A large, dark mountain sits on the roof. The SOUND of an incoming mortar shell grows in intensity.

EXT LOT NIGHT

BOOM BOOM, getting up near the broken gate hears the sound and hits the deck, again.

BOOM BOOM  
 Incoming!

CUT TO:

Showroom roof. Buford comes screaming in like a shell and lands in a huge pile of keys. He looks like a shotgun has gone off in his face, the gigantic cigar rolled back like the misfiring barrel of an old musket. SMOKE rises from his person and the oversized hat brim is down around his neck. Buford spits and sputters, trying to regain composure. As he sits up he notices the S has disappeared from his prized belt buckle.

BUFORD  
 SonuvaBITCH!!

CUT TO:

The front of the lot. MISTY AIRES, her conservative dress suit scorched, recovers from the concussion to report.

MISTY  
 What the hell???

CAMERON, the cameraman, 20ish in jeans and T-shirt, long hair ponytailed, looks over the camera briefly, reinserts a cord and makes a rolling motion with his free hand while ducking under a tent, leaving Misty out in the storm.

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM

Pandemonium. People run back and forth. Above the confusion, a TELEVISION plays a newscast. The newscaster stops, his hand to his ear, listening intently for a few seconds.

ANCHOR

... and authorities are still searching for the terrorists...  
(pauses for a second) What? Folks, we have a situation that has just developed at the Hickeyland car lot. Reporter Misty Aires is at the scene...Misty can you hear me...can you tell us what's going on...

CUT TO:

EXT FRONT LOT

Misty straightens and begins to report, dodging debris falling from the sky as she reports.

MISTY

John, I am at the Hickeyland car dealership where an explosion...ow...has just rocked this business. As you know, John, we were here to report on a novel commercial the owners were filming this evening as well as the record-breaking sale they were running today. The dealership had...ow... promised to give away a 60 thousand dollar sports car this evening if the dealership broke the world's record for single day car sales. We know that they have broken the record, but something has happened...ow...in the filming of the commercial that is a tragedy. Apparently, while filming the explosion of a vehicle for an ad

MISTY

(cont.)

campaign, something has gone terribly wrong. There has been a huge explosion...ow...can you give them a shot of that, Cammy...a huge explosion set off, apparently by the supposedly controlled explosion being filmed for the commercial. People are stunned, they're trying to find loved ones and total chaos has taken over here, John...AAAGGGHHH!

Misty leaps out of frame of the television, leaving a picture of background pandemonium amidst the raining keys. The SIRENS are here. POLICE CARS come screaming onto the lot SCREECHING TIRES. The first to arrive runs smack into a new sports car. Buford notices from the roof.

BUFORD

Son...

A second police car crashes into a truck.

BUFORD

(cont.)

uva...

The third arrival takes out the tent under which Misty and Cammy the cameraman have sought refuge from the keystorm.

BUFORD

(cont.)

BITCH!!! SONUVABITCH! SONUVABITCH!  
SONUVABI...

BUFORD goes into a BUG-EYED conniption fit as the remaining police cars arrive. A final trailing unmarked police car pulls up. Out steps Lieutenant L.T. KAZINSKY. Kazinsky is bald with a constantly furrowed brow, and looks almost as if he's angry.

Kazinsky's a city dweller though he can't stifle the occasional "twang" in his speech, betraying his country origins. He hikes up his pants above an expensive pair of BOOTS WE HAVE SEEN BEFORE, surveys the chaos, and is struck on the head by a SMALL OBJECT coming down from the heavens. He suddenly recognizes the hail storm and ducks for cover under what is left of the TENT. Misty has resumed reporting and Cammy the cameraman is lying underneath the front of the police car which has invaded the tent and knocked him to his back, only

his camera and arms visible as he struggles to keep the camera on Misty.

Misty on T.V. again.

MISTY

As you can see, John, something is raining down from the sky... small, hard...KEYS?...have you got that, Cammy?

CAMMY'S CAMERA'S P.O.V.. Cammy has pulled the camera back to the ready position. He would look normal except that he is lying flat on his back still.

CAMMY

(under the car)

Ungh.

The T.V. screen is filled with the hailstorm of keys raining down. Kazinsky chimes in and Cammy follows the sound, spinning his camera down and left to frame Lt. Kazinsky.

KAZINSKY

What the hell is going on here?

Cammy again spins the camera towards the voice. With each change in voice, Cammy points the camera in that direction.

MISTY

(to Kazinsky)

There's been an explosion...

KAZINSKY

I can SEE that. I mean what the hell is coming out of the sky?

MISTY

(picking up a key)

It appears to be keys...

KAZINSKY

Keys?

MISTY

Yes, KEYS!

Kazinsky picks up a key and scrutinizes it carefully for a second. His face begins to redden and he slowly stands.

KAZINSKY

SARGENT!!

SARGENT KETCHAM, 30's, tall and gangly, runs serpentine through the diminishing hail storm towards the tent, stumbles underneath it, and slides face first into the camera; he regains his composure and snaps to attention on his knees.

KETCHAM

What the hell IS this stuff?

KAZINSKY

Keys. Let's get this area cordoned off, Sargent. Half the people working here are ex-cons so nobody leaves this lot except to be booked downtown, you got that?

KETCHAM

Yes sir!

MISTY

(shoving mic in his face)  
Officer, could you tells us what's going on here? Officer...

Kazinsky and Misty are both now standing. Cammy, struggling with a camera which is becoming increasingly heavy, can no longer manage to keep the frame high enough to catch their faces. As they converse, we see various parts of Lt. Kazinsky and Misty.

KAZINSKY

Kazinsky. Lt. Richard Kazinsky

MISTY

Lt. Kazinsky. Can you tell us if you have any clues as to what's happening here?

KAZINSKY

There's more going on here than meets the eye, and I assure you we will get to the bottom of this.

MISTY

Will you be in charge of this investigation...

KAZINSKY

Of course I'm in charge... (to Ketcham) are you still here? Get these people rounded up now!! I want employee records for the dealership, and I want to know who's missing...

KETCHAM

Yes sir!

MISTY

Can you tell us if you have any suspec...

As Ketcham leaves, he trips over the camera cord, and the screen we are watching goes black.

CUT TO:

EXT POLICE STATION NIGHT

Ten or so POLICE VANS sit in disarray in front of the precinct station. Customers and salesman alike are being roughhoused into the station by officers.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION NIGHT

Total chaos. Hundreds of people are being processed. The CUSTOMERS and SALESMEN are mixed in with HOOKERS and small-time CROOKS. The police have them lined up 3 deep against the walls.

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

Lt. Kazinsky is puffing away furiously at a good-sized cigar. He appears frustrated and exits.

INT HALLWAY

KAZINSKY

Ketcham!

KETCHAM

Yessir!

KAZINSKY

Where the hell are those records?

KETCHAM

Here, sir. (plops down a stack of files) We've rounded up the car guys now. So far we don't know if anyone's missing except...

KAZINSKY

(looking through the files) Carmen Lies? That's a helluva name for a car salesman. Let's start with him.

KETCHAM

Carmen Lies? He's the only one we haven't found yet. That's why the file's on top.

KAZINSKY

Who was he with last? Somebody had to see him...who's his manager? If you can't find him, find out who his manager is and bring him to me.

KETCHAM

Yes sir.

INT STATION

Ketcham heads off around the corner, wading through the throngs of people. He goes up to the desk sargent.

KETCHAM

Hey, Sarge, we find that Carmen Lies yet?

DESK SARGENT

(Not looking up from paperwork)  
How the hell would I know? We got the car guys locked up in the holding room. Go check for yourself.

KETCHAM

I guess I'll just go see...

DESK SARGENT

Yea, you do that...NEXT!

Ketcham heads back into the mass of humanity. He gets caught in a moving wave and is swept along, apparently in the wrong direction as he fights against the flow, swimming salmon-like upstream. He finally extricates himself from the wave and



slips down a side corridor.

CUT TO:

INT HOLDING CELL

The holding cell is windowless and has a surreal quality similar to the showroom at the dealership. People are gathered into small groups talking and laughing. One could mistake this for car deals being made. The salesmen are only distinguishable by their white polo shirts. Some have formed a small casino in the back of the cell pitching quarters and playing liar's poker. Ketcham comes to the door, looks over the group and...

KETCHAM

Carmen Lies! (pause) Caaarmen Liiiiiies!  
Heeeeey!

The throng goes silent and looks as one to the source of the noise

KETCHAM

I'm looking for Carmen.

Blank stares. Suddenly KELLY steps up brazenly and speaks.

KELLY

I'm a car...wo...man...you want to buy a car? (to the gamblers) Five sixes. I oughta be outta here in a couple of...

KETCHAM

(interrupting)

I'm looking for Carmen the car man...are you gambling?

KELLY

Oh...no...(pocketing her bill)  
Hey, are you sure cause I can get you a great deal...

KETCHAM

I'm not looking to buy a car...  
(looks at her suspiciously) I need to find Carmen. Has anybody seen him?

KELLY

(starting to spiel)

You look like a sports car kinda guy...am I right? We've got a sweet little Mustang convertible, low miles, candy apple red...it's you...what'd you say your name was?

KETCHAM

(pointing out his badge)

Sargent Ketcham. Candy apple red? Maybe later. Who's your manager? Is he here?

KELLY

(handing him a card)

Preacher. Over there in the corner. Hey, if you change your mind give me a call...

They exchange a look of mutual desire.

KETCHAM

PREACHER! I'm looking for a manager named Preacher.

Preacher rises slowly in the back. He silently strides through the crowded cell. He is short. Like Buford, one might say he's a tall midget, yet he has a presence. His face is unemotional as he speaks.

PREACHER

I'm Preacher. What'da you want?

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

Ketcham stands behind Preacher, who sits smoking a cigarette. Lt. Kazinsky enters the room and a silent moment passes.

KAZINSKY

Preacher is it? Funny, I can't find a "Preacher" in the employee files.

PREACHER

Beakman, John. But I go by Preacher.

KAZINSKY

Alright Mr. Beakman...uh Preacher,

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

what can you tell me about tonight?

PREACHER

Not much. I was sittin' in the tower  
when the shit hit the fan.

KAZINSKY

The "Tower"? What is that, that  
little glass house up front?

PREACHER

Yea. I'm penciling deals and  
suddenly--boom.

KAZINSKY

Well, so far we've accounted for most  
all the employees--except for a  
Carmen Lies. Did you see him today?

PREACHER

Yea. He was working. Penciled a  
deal for him right before the big  
bang. Franklin...Ben Franklin.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT SHOWROOM EARLIER THIS NIGHT

PREACHER

Let's get this one...fuck up and I'll  
fry your ass.

CARMEN

Done deal, boss. What's with the  
gate?

PREACHER

Someone lookin' for Buford...

CARMEN

Candyman?

PREACHER

(suddenly serious)

You don't need to be worrying about  
that...just make sure you get this  
deal...

CARMEN

No problem, boss, got 'em eating  
outta my hand.

He hands Carmen a small sheet of paper and Carmen heads back  
into the blackness.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM MINUTES LATER

PREACHER

Why? Did he go down with the ship,  
so to speak?

KAZINSKY

As of now, we're not sure. But it  
looks awfully suspicious for someone  
who was up front moments before the  
back end of your lot was levelled to  
vanish. We got there just after she  
blew and locked her down tight.

PREACHER

Only four blocks away and you got  
there that quick, eh? That's crack  
police work. Remind me to give the  
fleet guy a spiff for selling the  
precinct the cars...

KAZINSKY

So, what's with the gate?

PREACHER

Oh, we had someone run down our gate.  
Happens all the time. With the rats  
we get, sometimes we gotta walk  
someone when they won't pay a  
reasonable price for something, they  
get to the gate and we turn 'em.  
This guy obviously didn't want to be  
turned again.

KAZINSKY

Turned? You mean you don't let 'em  
leave, don't you? Why didn't you  
just throw his keys on the  
roof...that's what you usually do,  
isn't it?

PREACHER

(leaning in, accusingly)

That's just for assholes...most times we turn 'em. Turn some people 5 or 6 times...Moby turned one today 3 or 4 he'd upped at noon.

KAZINSKY

(defensive)

Look, asshole, we think something more than just car selling's been going on there and maybe that's why she blew.

PREACHER

Like what?

KAZINSKY

Well, let's see...Beakman, John, aka "Preacher." Three arrests for bad checks, no convictions. Two arrests for possession and trafficking, no convictions. Like what? How about a little Christmas in July? Any more signs of Candyman, "Preacher"? Maybe all those "sales" weren't just cars.

PREACHER

We ain't had no "snow" problems since they locked ol' Dunn up a couple of months ago, so I don't know what you're talking about.

KAZINSKY

So who's this Dunn?

PREACHER

Scott Dunn. Used to be in finance, that is until he tried to launder 150 thousand for Buscotti. I remember he turned a guy 11 times once. He and Carmen were like pit bulls if they had a deal.

KAZINSKY

So where's this Dunn?

PREACHER

Got pinched by you guys, I thought. Why don't you ask Dunn? You probably



PREACHER

(cont.)

still got 'im here...he couldn't make the bail and Buford washed his hands of 'im... bad for business, ya know.

KAZINSKY

So, Carmen and Dunn were as thick as thieves, eh?

PREACHER

They knew each other. Hung out together. Carmen liked to use Dunn when he could. One thing about Dunn...he could get 'em bought. But they cooled off after the demo thing a few years ago. After that, Carmen was strictly bidness with Dunn.

KAZINSKY

Demo thing?

PREACHER

Yea. Dunn and Carmen and two other salesmen went out to lunch one day and came back with the demo full of holes--9 millimeter. Rumor was a buy gone bad, but Carmen never said a word and Dunn managed to blame the other guys. They got hit in the head and Dunn got into finance. Not a bad deal, for him anyway. Like I said--ask Dunn. Or maybe you could just call Buscotti yourself. Don't you still have a hotline or something?

KAZINSKY

KETCHAM! (to Preacher) I think we'll keep you here until I talk to this Dunn. Why'd Carmen keep working with Dunn if he used him like that?

PREACHER

Everybody uses everybody in the car bidness. In the final analysis, it's who gets things done...and Dunn got it done...

KAZINSKY

Well, I'm going to get whoever got

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

this done, and I wouldn't be surprised to find out that you were in the middle of it...

KETCHAM enters.

KAZINSKY

(cont., to Ketcham)

Get this guy back down to holding.  
And get me this Carmen...  
I want to talk to this guy...

INT HALLWAY

Kazinsky walks into the hall, turns , heading deeper into the bowels of the station where his office is located.

INT KAZINSKY'S OFFICE

He sits at his desk and scans through a computer list of recent arrestees, finding the name SCOTT DUNN. He peruses a list of charges of prior arrests, all drug related, with no convictions.

KAZINSKY

Well, well, Mr. Dunn. Haven't got anything to stick yet, eh? Well, if you were involved with this, you will be "done" this time.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION JAIL NIGHT

SCOTT DUNN, late thirties, tall, thin, and certainly handsome, is the epitome of what a used car salesman looks like. He could have been the Marlboro Man, or any other model. He is well kempt, even in his dress oranges of the jail. His demeanor suggests an ability to hide anger, or almost any emotion, and to come off as pleasant and amiable regardless of the situation. A GUARD stands at the door, waiting for it to open.

GUARD

Open 13!

A loud CLANK as the door slides back.

DUNN

So, what's the menu this evening,  
Rocky?

ROCKY

The Lieutenant wants to see you down-  
stairs.

DUNN

A command performance, how exciting.

ROCKY

Yea, yea, wise guy. Let's go.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM MINUTES LATER

DUNN

To what do I owe the pleasure?

KAZINSKY

Listen, wise guy, there's no pleasure  
to be had here. I've got a car lot  
up in flames, and a salesman missing  
that so far it seems wasn't too  
happy. Maybe you remember him?  
Carmen...Carmen Lies.

DUNN

Yea, I remember him. I haven't seen  
him since I first got here.  
So, what can I help you with?

KAZINSKY

You have seen him recently?

DUNN

Yea, he came by right after I got  
pinched. So what? We used to work  
together.

KAZINSKY

Dealing?

DUNN

Carmen? (laughs) Not Carmen. That  
boy was too much in love to get  
involved in anything that could take  
him away from the little unit he's

DUNN

(cont.)

got. No, Carmen's a good guy. He stood by me through some tough times.

KAZINSKY

So what kind of "tough times" did he stick by you through? The "demo times"? You made out pretty good in that one, eh?

DUNN

(composed)

Look, Lt. Kazinsky. You gotta have friends in this business. Everybody you talk to thinks automatically that you're scum. Yea. Carmen is my friend. We covered each other's butts at the lot, what of it?

KAZINSKY

And you don't rat out a friend, right? Especially one who covered your ass when that buy went bad.

DUNN

Look, that's ancient history. If you think he blew the dump, you're gonna have to find out some other way. Personally, I wish it had been me, and if it was Carmen, I hope he got a ton for levelling the joint. It's for sure Buford owed him. I think it's more likely that Buford did it himself. You check the insurance on it? Buford's the real thief. The bastard has been stealing from that lot for years. You know what he does? He'll take factory wheels and tires off new cars and trucks and stash them, charge the salesman's deal and the customer for the new wheels and then take them to Vegas and sell them off. Hell, Recon charges a hunsky just to wash a car...who do you think gets that?

KAZINSKY

Why did Buford "owe him"?

DUNN

Well, a couple of months before I got on the fast track for "Club Fed" here, Carmen was S.O.M....

KAZINSKY

S.O.M?

DUNN

(condescendingly)

Salesman of the Month?

Buford took a few of us to Vegas. He did that every once and a while.

That's when he'd sell off the tires he'd been stealing to Buscotti. Of course, you would know more about that than me. With all the thieving he did from the sales force he could afford to...I mean we paid for it anyway, you know? Anyway, Carmen was supposed to get a 5 grand bonus and go to Vegas, but he wanted to bring CJ. Buford not only stiffed him on the trip, he only gave him a grand for bonus that month. Said the DOC was too low or some shit...Carmen was pissed. His ol' lady thought he made it up so he wouldn't have to take her. Caused him a lot of grief...he almost lost her.

KAZINSKY

So, Carmen was pissed at the lot, then? Pissed enough to blow it sky high. You've been a lot of help, Mr. Dunn. Ketcham!

KETCHAM enters.

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

Put this piece of shit back where he came from.

DUNN

I'll tell you this, Kazinsky. If Carmen did pull this off, you'll never catch him. He's way too smart for you.

KAZINSKY  
As smart as you? (to Ketcham) I want  
to talk to whoever Carmen was  
"working" before the lot blew.

Ketcham takes Dunn and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT HOLDING CELL MINUTES LATER

KETCHAM  
Ben Franklin...

Ben sits in the back of the cell. He looks around timidly,  
and then steps through the mass and speaks.

BEN  
I'm Ben...

KETCHAM  
Come with me.

INT STATION

Ketcham and Ben wade back out into the overcrowded station.  
As they pass the DESK SARGENT, A YOUNG WOMAN with CHILD in  
tow angrily grills the Desk Sargent.

WOMAN  
When can we go home?

CHILD  
Mommy, I'm tired...

DESK SARGENT  
Look, lady, we're processing everyone  
as fast as we can. If you want, we  
can put the tyke in an office until  
we get your paperwork done.

KETCHAM  
The file on Franklin, Ben?

DESK SARGENT  
(Handing Ketcham file)  
Here.



WOMAN

(to Desk Sargent)

But, why am I here at all? I just brought Jenny out to see the fireworks...

DESK SARGENT

Well, lady, looks like you got your wish.

Ketcham and Ben wade through the throng and disappear down a hallway.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM OBSERVATION ROOM

Ketcham deposits Ben in the interrogation room and leaves. LT. Kazinsky lights a cigar and watches Ben through a two-way mirror.

The smoke curls up like a small twister as Kazinsky watches. Ketcham enters with Ben's file.

KAZINSKY

Who's this?

KETCHAM

You're not gonna believe this... Ben Franklin. He was buying a car from Carmen just before it happened. (snickering) He looks just like a hundred dollar bill...

KAZINSKY

Poor schmuck. At least he'd be easy to track down. He's got his picture all over the place.

Lt. Kazinsky exits the observation room and enters the interrogation room.

KAZINSKY

So, Ben is it? You were with this Carmen before the explosion? Did you see him after?

BEN

Well, I was with him before everything went all to hell. Who are you?

KAZINSKY

Lt. Kazinsky and I'll be asking the questions here, OK? So, where did he go? What happened to him? I want you to tell me exactly what happened from the beginning...

BEN

Well, I remember I parked across the street from the lot...I was just gonna look, you know. Carmen came out and started talking to me. He was really a nice young man...didn't even care if I was buying a car or not. Just wanted to talk. So, I decided to look at that Dynasty I'd spied...

CUT TO:

EXT LOT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

CARMEN and BEN stand next to the DYNASTY. The BEIGE 1 TON sits at the front gate.

VO

...We just soooooold another one. Hickeyland would like to thank Mr. and Mrs Pigeon for their purchase of a new truck. Thanks for shopping the world's number 1 dealer...Hickeyland!

CARMEN

What was that? Sorry, I couldn't hear you for the page...what'd you say you do?

BEN

Gravedigger...

CARMEN

Really? How long you been doin' that?

BEN

All my life. Right across the street, there.

CARMEN

Oh, at Franklin's? Wow. Diggin' out

CARMEN

(cont.)

there all day in the hot sun...it's gotta be tough. What's a gravedigger make these days?

BEN

Aw, I do OK. 'Sides, I got a little something for a rainy day...

CARMEN

You know, I've been working here for years and I see the funeral processions coming in almost every day, but I've never found the time to visit...not since Mom and Dad...

BEN

Most people too busy chasing the Almighty Dollar to stop by and see their loved ones much less all I do for them. Sometimes I wonder if all my work's for nothing. But everyone stops by sooner or later...

CARMEN

(grinning)

Now isn't that the truth. You don't mind if I wait a little bit before checking in, though, do you, Ben?

BEN

Nope. But I bet your folks wouldn't mind a vist now and then. What's their name?

CARMEN

Lies.

BEN

Hmmm...don't ring a bell. Stop by sometime--a grave's a lonely, cold place if no one comes by. You got a spot picked out?

CARMEN

Not me, Ben. I'll probably get cremated. Besides, I'm planning to be around for a little while longer.

BEN

You're not much for slowin' down and smelling the roses, are ya, son?

CARMEN

(waxing tender)

Actually, I am, Ben. Just this morning I told my girl that first of next month we're going to spend some time together...you know, a vacation? We're going to be miserable in New York at Les Miserables.

(catching himself)

You know, Ben, most people think that all I care about is selling. Really, I just like people. I'd rather visit than sell...you don't have to buy today, do you, Ben?

BEN

(slightly startled)

I don't suppose...

CARMEN

Great...

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY

So, he told you he was going to take some time off?

BEN

Well sir, he said he was gonna be miser...mis...something in New York. Don't rightly know what.

KAZINSKY

You mean Les Miserable?

BEN

Yea, that's it. Said that was his girl's favorite place.

KAZINSKY

So, he was going to New York with his girl...

BEN  
Yes sir, with his girl...

KAZINSKY  
Ketcham!

Ketcham appears.

KETCHAM  
Yes sir.

KAZINSKY  
Find out who this Carmen is seeing.  
Get me a name and address...I want to  
know what she had for breakfast this  
morning.

KETCHAM  
Yes sir.

Lt. Kazinsky has the look of a bloodhound who has just picked  
up a scent.

KAZINSKY  
So, Ben, what happened next?

CUT TO:

EXT LOT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

BEN  
(brightening)  
So, you got a girl? I had a girl  
once...prettiest little redhead you  
ever saw...she left me for an older  
man. Said I didn't pay 'er enough  
attention. You better take care of  
your'ns, son...they can disappear in  
no time...

CARMEN  
CJ's a redhead, too! Best women in  
the world, except they're so damn  
hard to figure out. If you let them  
have their way, they don't respect  
you. If you stand up for yourself,  
they claim you don't love them.

BEN  
You know, son, I figured out what the

BEN

(cont.)

trick is. You don't have to read their minds or anything so tough, you just gotta act as if nothing's a problem. No matter how bad things get...no problem.

CARMEN

Really? That's it?

BEN

Yes sir. All they really want is to feel secure. If it don't bother you, it won't bother them. Oh, they'll pitch a hissy ever once in a while, but that jus' means they need a little attention. That's when you send 'em flowers or cook 'em a nice dinner...

CARMEN

CJ likes tulips. You know, Ben, it's late, but to be honest I'm enjoying your company...want to get a cup of coffee? We got a fresh pot-o-poison brewing in the showroom. We could just sit and chat.

BEN

(relaxing)

No, I can't drink coffee this late. Bad prostrate, ya know. That's why I'm a-lookin' for another car. The seat in mine doesn't...I can't really...these sure look expensive...

CARMEN

Yessir, Ben, that's true. But I can get you a really good deal on this one. When'd you buy your last car, Ben?

BEN

Oh, it's bin a good while...

CARMEN

Well, if you're interested in this Dynasty, I have to tell you, Ben, this is on my hit list.



BEN

Your hit list?

CARMEN

Yessir. I keep a list of the stuff that needs to go and this Dynasty's one of them. I'll bet you know all the good spots at Franklin's, don't you? Well, I know all the good ones here...

BEN

I got the prettiest spot...under a weeping willow just at the back... it's so pretty at sunset...I know of another one...

CARMEN

You mean for me?

BEN

Yea. You oughta think of gettin' yourself one...you never know when or where these days...maybe that girl of yours would appreciate the chance to visit after you go...

CARMEN

Hell, if I go, she'll probably be the reason.

(they laugh)

Like I told you, Ben, I plan on sticking around a while. Besides, she wouldn't come. Graves are too sad for her...

BEN

'Sat so? What's this here?

They both lean in to look at the hood, the reflections of their faces almost caricatures.

CARMEN

(rubbing a spot)

That's just a wax speck from where we reconed it, Ben...see?

BEN

Hmph.

The CAMERA pans around to the car's P.O.V.. Carmen is dressed in dark slacks and a white polo style shirt with circular, black embroidery over where his heart should be which reads "Carmen" on top and "Hickeyland" underneath. Ben is clad in dirty overalls and a brown, once white, T-shirt. Over their heads is a flashing sign--"Hickeyland."

CARMEN

(walking to driver's side)  
Let me show you something here. What kind of car you driving now, Ben?

BEN

Gremlin.

CARMEN

Great. How many miles?

BEN

Not many. I don't get out much. Mostly it just sits in the garage. If it didn't hurt so much to sit...

CARMEN

Uh huh. So, Ben, you just looking for a little more comfort?

BEN

Yea.

CARMEN

(opening the door, feigning salespeak)  
Well, let me show you some of the features and benefits of this truly luxurious automobile.

BEN

(gets the joke)  
I guess it wouldn't hurt just to look.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

Ketcham bursts through the door. He is out of breath and babbling.

KETCHAM

Lieutenant! The thing...it happened

KETCHAM

(cont.)

again...it just went up...

KAZINSKY

Ketcham! Calm down! What happened again?

KETCHAM

The LOT! It blew up again!

KAZINSKY

Holy shit, again?! (to Ben) You stay here. (to Ketcham) Let's go!

INT STATION

Lt. Kazinsky and Sargent Ketcham rush out into the sea of people in the station.

KETCHAM

Well, I guess we can eliminate all these people as suspects now.

KAZINSKY

Everyone is a suspect until I say they're not a suspect, you got that, Ketcham? No one leaves until I get to the bottom of this.

CUT TO:

EXT LOT NIGHT MINUTES AFTER 2ND EXPLOSION

A BOMB SQUAD truck, the CORONER, and POLICE CARS are parked amidst the rubble. Two buildings are plainly destroyed, though a few are left standing. The police are rummaging through the debris as Lt. Kazinsky approaches. CAPTAIN LYON, mid-forties, long grey hair pulled back into a pony tail, tallish and gaunt, is holding something from a pen in his hand.

KAZINSKY

So, what's this new evidence?

LYON

It seems to be a heart, Lieutenant.

KAZINSKY

A heart?

LYON

Yes sir, a green heart pendant.  
Jade, most likely. Nice cut...

KAZINSKY

(interrupting)

Hell, that thing could've been here  
for months, or could belong to one of  
the customers.

LYON

Well, sir, we've found out that the  
salesman that we're looking for had a  
heart just like this one. That  
salesman over there confirmed it.

RUNE HATCHER, early twenties, very GQish, sits in the burned-out hulk of a car looking shocked. Lt. Kazinsky approaches him holding the necklace.

KAZINSKY

Son, how'd you avoid being taken  
downtown earlier?

HATCHER

I...I skated off the lot to get  
something to eat and see my girl for  
a few minutes...they work us pretty  
long hours...I been here since 7 this  
morning and hadn't eaten all  
day...big sale, you know...

KAZINSKY

Yea, big something alright. So, how  
do you know this belongs to Carmen?

HATCHER

He showed it to me the first day I  
worked here. His girl got it for him  
when they first met. He'd just got  
the setting fixed and we had to make  
a P.D.I. run so he took me with him  
to pick it up.

KAZINSKY

P.D.I.?

HATCHER

Pre-delivery Inspection. It's where  
all the cars get state inspections

HATCHER

(cont.)

and oil changes and stuff before they're put out for sale.

KAZINSKY

So, how can you be sure this is Carmen's and not one like it?

HATCHER

Because, you see the size of the eye thingy the chain goes through? Carmen had lost it once before and he said he got such a big eye so it wouldn't come out ever again. And see how the swirl in the stone goes? Every stone has a unique pattern and Carmen pointed out how his heart had a heart-shaped pattern IN the stone--he said it was very rare. It's his alright. No way he leaves that heart anywhere...

KAZINSKY

Think so? We find little heart and you deduce from that that he's gotta be here? These little jade things are a dime a dozen...

HATCHER

Malachite.

KAZINSKY

What?

HATCHER

It's malachite. Not as expensive as jade, but softer and more rare...I'm telling you Lieutenant, Carmen would have rather lost an arm than that heart...

KAZINSKY

(to Ketcham)

Get him down to the station, and have the lab determine if this is Jade or Malachite. Check for explosives residue, too. If this is Carmen's I want to know if this guy was here when this one blew.

LYON

You might want to take a look back in the back before you leave. They think they've found where the bomb was planted.

KAZINSKY

You get him and the heart downtown, and tell the desk sargent I want to talk to anyone who saw this guy when I get back, you got it?

CUT TO:

Lt. Kazinsky is walking amidst the rubble of the building that was blown up first. Its charred hull still smolders. Laying upside down on top of the remains of the commercial truck is a burnt-out hulk of a car. It is the Dynasty that Carmen was last seen driving before the explosion. Explosives experts buzz around the charred remains, taking samples and photographs.

KAZINSKY

Who's in charge here?

WOMAN

I am...

KAZINSKY

Oh, shit...

KATHRYN CANON, explosives expert, is a fiery redhead who could be considered beautiful. She looks more girl-next-door than chemist, except for the lab coat she wears. She looks over her anachronistic spectacles at Lt Kazinsky with a bit of glee. She and Kazinsky have met before, and he doesn't really care for her. She is strong, smart and opiniated, and usually right on.

CANON

A little bit over-reactive, don't you think? Just because you don't like the truck you got here is no reason to blow the place up.

KAZINSKY

Miss Canon. How perceptive of you. I wish I could claim credit for this, but since I can't, I'm sure you can give me some insight into who did?



CANON

No suspects yet? I can tell you whoever did this was sure pissed. There's was enough C-4 here to raze a whole block. The only reason the first explosion was as contained as it was is that more than half of the C-4 didn't ignite. Strange, it's as if the explosion they filmed blew the device apart just before it went off. Really amazing it blew at all...but that means we got more than one bomb...the second explosion...that one was totally separate.

KAZINSKY

Two bombs? Did any of our people get caught in it?

CANON

No, luckily they'd cordoned off the lot and we hadn't arrived yet. Two minutes earlier and 20 cops buy it...

KAZINSKY

Could both bombs have been in place already? Radio controlled?

CANON

We haven't found any remnants that would suggest anything more than your garden variety timer type. But, the interesting part is this baby here...this car was at ground zero when the first one went off.

KAZINSKY

What is that?

CANON

Well, now it's scrap. But, it appears to have been a Dynasty.

KAZINSKY

A Dynasty? Look, Canon, I want to know if the bomb was in this car as soon as you figure this out, you got it? I'm going back...I got a hunch I know right where this is leading...

Lt. Kazinsky spins gruffly and walks off.

CANON

(to herself)

I know it's the 4th of July, but this is maybe just a little overboard guys...

CUT TO:

INT STATION NIGHT

Lt. Kazinsky is screaming over the din at the Desk Sargent, who still seems non-plussed at the chaos in front of him.

KAZINSKY

Did we find the car guys that saw Carmen last? Where are they?

SARGENT

We got 'em in rooms 2 through 6. So far, no Carmen, but we got the managers and a couple of sales guys said they saw him before it blew.

Lt. Kazinsky nods approvingly and turns to wade through the sea of humanity once again.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY

Mr. Franklin, what kind of car did you buy this evening?

BEN

A Dynasty...a black Dynasty. Why?

KAZINSKY

Well, we've found a black Dynasty in the rubble near where the explosion occurred.

BEN

What? My car got blowed up? Well, I'll be damned...I hope Carmen wasn't in it. Nice kid. Hate to lose the Dynasty. First one I'd found it didn't hurt to sit in...

KAZINSKY

(interrupting)

I'm sure you can find another car...Ben, I need to know if you looked at the car very thoroughly before you drove it? Did you notice any small packages...in the trunk, behind the seat...were there any things in the car that didn't come with it from the factory?

BEN

Well, there was a...what d'ya call em...CV player...

KAZINSKY

You mean a CD player...a compact disc? Where was it?

BEN

In the trunk. I noticed it when he was showing me...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT LOT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

Ben extricates himself from the trunk, into which he had all but disappeared, his face flushed as if he has just finished a long run. Panting heavily he shuffles towards Carmen.

CARMEN

(beckoning)

Here, Ben, have a seat.

BEN

(still breathing heavy)

Don't mind if I do...

CARMEN

(closing the door)

I'll just run around so I can show you. You won't believe it.

Carmen quickly walks around the car, gently closing the still open trunk. He looks across the way to the other salesmen standing on the rock and gestures with the universal symbol for ire. The other salesmen gesture back as Carmen opens the door and gets in.

CARMEN

Isn't this comfortable?

BEN

(having almost caught his breath)  
Well, at least the seat is  
soft...

CARMEN

The radio's here...here's the power  
button. You know you can pre-set up  
to 12 stations on this model? Just  
touch one button and there you are.

BEN

What was that box thing in the trunk?

CARMEN

What? Oh, you mean the CD changer?  
That's where you can put up to 6 of  
your favorite CD's...then you tune  
the radio to 88.1 and you can play  
those as well as the cassette player  
here. It's really nice for long  
trips.

(leaning over Ben)

And the new seat belts are height-  
adjustable, see?

(Carmen slides the adjuster down)  
So, you don't have to ride with the  
seatbelt cutting across your face,  
isn't that great!

(feigning amazement)

Why don't you try it on and see how  
it feels?

Ben straps the seatbelt over himself and Carmen does the  
same.

CARMEN

Now that's comfort!

BEN

(unconvinced)

Well, at least it ain't cuttin off  
the circulation...

CARMEN

Now, let's see how this baby sounds,  
OK?

Carmen starts the car and guns the engine a few times.

CARMEN

So, Ben, what'd ya say we take a spin?

BEN

(off guard)

Well...

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY

Now wait a minute. You come on the lot just to look, and after talking to this guy for a few minutes, decide to take a ride?

BEN

Yes sir. I didn't see no harm in just takin a ride... 'sides, he was a nice young man...

KAZINSKY

Damn, this guy is slick, real slick. So, did anything unusual happen on the test drive?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT CAR EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

The dashlights give off an eerie glow from underneath, making Carmen appear somewhat sinister. The two men drive for a moment in silence.

CARMEN

How bout some tunes?  
(Carmen turns the radio on)  
Now, what kind of music do you like?  
What's your favorite station?

BEN

(hesitantly)

Well, I used to listen to Blues when I was younger, but I don't...

CARMEN

(cutting him off)

I've got just what you need, Ben.

Carmen flips through the stations until he happens across Nina Simone's rendition of "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good." Ben seems to loosen up a bit and they listen for a moment.

CARMEN

How's that?

BEN

Now there's something I haven't heard for a long time.

CARMEN

And, you've got all power--windows, locks and mirrors.

BEN

(leaning over, timidly)  
That's an awful lot of buttons, son.

CARMEN

(showing how they work)  
Not really, Ben. Once you learn how to work something, it gives you total control.

(Unlocks doors)

This one controls the driver's window, this one the passenger, (rolls down windows) and this one keeps anyone but you from playing with the power. And this one moves your mirrors, just switch it here for driver side or passenger side.

BEN

(Ben plays with the buttons)  
Well, that's not so hard...

CARMEN

And there's a child-proof latch. Keeps the little ones in.

BEN

I don't have any family left, but that's nice.

CARMEN

Me neither, Ben, but I'm trying to

CARMEN

(cont.)

get one. Ben, I like you, so I'm going to do something, well...different. They're asking 6995 for this Dynasty, but I'm telling you now, if you'll trust me, you can get it for about 2 grand and your trade, O.K.?

BEN

Heck, why would you do that for me, son?

CARMEN

Because, you opened my eyes to something more important than this that I've been...neglecting. Starting to get the feel of her, Ben?

BEN

Yea. She's real nice. Rides real nice...

CARMEN

(with a little grin)

Well, she drives even better...your turn.

Carmen pulls off the road and stops just over a hill. It is pitch-black except for the headlights piercing the darkness.

BEN

I don't need to drive...

CARMEN

Aw, c'mon, Ben. We're just out for a ride, right? You drive her back it looks like I'm doin my job...you wouldn't want to get me fired, would you?

BEN

Well, no...I don't guess it could hurt to just drive it.

CARMEN

Course, not. C'mon on around.

EXT HIGHWAY NIGHT



Ben gets out as Carmen adjusts the mirrors and seat so Ben will have to play with them. Carmen jumps out and heads for the back as Ben walks around the front. A hum in the distance grows ever louder as they exit the car. As Ben passes in front of the headlights, a semi-tractor trailer comes screaming over the hill, its horn drowning out the music from the car. Ben looks like a deer trapped in headlights just before being splattered like a bug on a windshield. The gust of wind from the semi knocks Ben from his feet, right on the seat of his pants. As the truck passes, the logo "BUSCOTTI TRUCKING" flashes by. Carmen rushes to help him up.

CARMEN

You OK, Ben?

BEN

(shaking)

Jesus Christ! Damn truckers.

CARMEN

(starting to laugh)

You almost ended up a greasy spot on that guy's grill!

BEN

(starting to laugh, too)

Damn, that was close! And now I'm all dirty. I'm gonna mess up the Dynasty.

CARMEN

Don't you worry about it, Ben, my friend. We've got a great recon department and they'll clean it up real good for you before you leave.

BEN

Well, I guess so...

Ben heads towards the driver's side of the Dynasty.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY

You almost got run down by a semi?

BEN

Yes sir. Damn thing came screamin' by while we were switchin' and was so close it almost took the paint off the car...fell flat on my ass. I known some truckers in my day, and they don't necessarily always follow the speed limit, but these guys was really movin'...the way those ol boys was movin', you'da thought they knew she was gonna blow...

KAZINSKY

What do you mean?

BEN

What do I mean? Well, hell son, it jus' seemed he was leavin' somewhere instead of goin' somewhere...

KAZINSKY

So, what happened next?

BEN

Well, I drove back to the lot and we went in and figured out what I could buy her for...

CUT TO:

INT SHOWROOM EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

Ben and Carmen are sitting at a table in the showroom. The room is abuzz with activity of car deals being made--salesmen running back and forth between the tower and their respective pigeons. Deals are being made with amazing speed, and the paging is ongoing.

VO

...we just soooold another one. Hickeyland would like to thank the Kapowski family for their purchase of a 1995 Nova from the used car department. Thanks folks for shopping the world's number 1 dealer...Hickeyland.

BEN

This chair sure ain't as soft as the Dynasty's...don't suppose you'd trade

BEN  
(cont.)  
straight across?

CARMEN  
Well, Ben, I don't know about that...but if you'll give me the keys to yours, I'll have the appraiser look at it and see what we can do. You parked over at Vulture's, right?  
(Ben hands him the keys and nods)  
Give me about five minutes, OK, buddy?

BEN  
(hands him keys)  
Sounds fair. I think I will have a cup of that coffee...where is it?

CARMEN  
Right over there, buddy. I'll see you in a few.

Carmen walks to the Tower and hands Moby the paperwork he has filled out. Moby spins in his chair and enters the information into the computer behind him and spins back around.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY  
So you're back at the lot, and you've decided to buy the car. Did you have your keys?

BEN  
Yea, until I gave 'em to Carmen. Why?

KAZINSKY  
(pissed and embarrassed)  
Never mind. What happened then?

BEN  
Well, he took my old car down to get it looked at. Went up to that tower thing and talked to his boss for a minute...

KAZINSKY

Ketcham!

Ketcham appears.

KAZINSKY

Those car guys still down the hall here?

KETCHAM

Yes sir. Rooms 2 through 6.

KAZINSKY

Mr. Franklin, I need to step out for a moment. If you need anything, Sgt. Ketcham here will get it for you.

Lt. Kazinsky heads out.

KETCHAM

Can I get you anything, Sir?

BEN

(inserting a huge chaw into his mouth)  
Jest a toon...

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 4 MINUTES LATER

SCATMAN sits, his large girth requiring two chairs to support him. He doesn't look happy. Lt. Kazinsky enters.

KAZINSKY

(looking in file)

Hello. Mr. Ponderling...

SCATMAN

Scatman...

KAZINSKY

Scatman...doesn't anyone in this business use their real name?

SCATMAN

(smiling)

Not if we kin help it.

KAZINSKY

Well, "Scatman," I would like to know what happened when one of your

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

salesmen, Carmen Lies, came down this evening just before the explosion.

SCATMAN

76 Gremlin. Nice shape. Tiny turd though...I put two dimes in it...

KAZINSKY

Did Carmen act strange in any way?

SCATMAN

Carmen? Naw, not really. He did peel out after I bid 'er... sure did piss ol' Boom Boom off...

KAZINSKY

Did he seem...anxious?

SCATMAN

I don' know. You know how many turds I look at on a Saturday? And with today's record breaking sale, I musta lost 20 pounds. You got any candy bars in this joint? I'm diabetic...gotta watch my blood sugar, ya know.

KAZINSKY

I'll get you a candy bar, but I want you to tell me exactly what happened when Carmen came down tonite.

SCATMAN

Could you make those Baby Ruths...7 or 8 oughta do. Now, let's see...'76 Gremlin...oh yea. Bid it just after I bid this sweet Lincoln. It was the shit...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT APPRAISAL TENT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

SCATMAN crawls out of the Gremlin, barely able to extricate himself from the small carriage. With great effort he stands, but the car seems to be stuck on him like a huge boil. Carmen grabs his hand and helps to pull him free.

CARMEN  
(straining)  
C'mon, Scatman...ugh...C'mon...

Scatman pops out to a huge SUCKING SOUND, rights himself and begins to walk around the vehicle with a critical eye. The car is immaculate, almost showroom new. Scatman has a brown cylindrical object stuffed in between his puffy lips. He slobbers and sucks as he talks, the brown stub leaving chocolate lines on his chin.

SCATMAN  
(wheezing)  
Roomy, ain't it?

CARMEN  
Most Gremlins are, buddy.

Scatman makes a few notes on the small sheet of paper and hands it back to Carmen.

CARMEN  
(Cont.)  
Aw, c'mon, Scatman, a dime? You know this thing is worth at least two dimes, you thieving prick...

SCATMAN  
(non-plussed)  
I might go 15 hun to make a deal. What I gonna do with a '76 Gremlin? Can't finance the damn turd...

CARMEN  
(schmoozing him)  
Yea, but this thing's only got 40 clicks and it's cleaner than your old lady's motor and you know it! Give me 2 dimes and I promise I'll get 4995 cash for it in less than a week...who sold that last donk you got buried in? Huh? C'mon, buddy, who do you love?

SCATMAN  
(giving in)  
Alright. But if this turdmobile is sittin' here at the end of the month, I'm personally gonna knock you in the head, you got it, S.O.M.?

CARMEN

No problem, buddy, no problem.

Carmen crawls in the Gremlin, guns it , and PEELS OUT. He turns around a corner, almost running over a tall, thin BLACK MAN dressed in ARMY FATIGUES. Carmen SCREECHES to a stop just short of the unmoving figure, BOOM BOOM, who is holding out a hand like a traffic cop.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 4

KAZINSKY

So who's this Boom Boom?

SCATMAN

He head up Recon. Ex Army. He was in da Nam...

KAZINSKY

You stay here, Mr. Scatman. I want to talk to this Boom Boom for a minute.

SCATMAN

(polishing off the last Baby Ruth)  
Could I get some more? My blood sugar's still a little low...

KAZINSKY

Yea, sure. Sgt. Ketcham can take care of you...  
(mumbling to himself as he leaves)  
Blood sugar? You can't have anything flowing through your veins BUT sugar...

INT HALLWAY

Lt. Kazinsky heads down the hall looking for Boom Boom. He pokes his head in interrogation room # 3.

KAZINSKY

Boom Boom?

MAN

Nope.

KAZINSKY

(back in hallway)  
Ketcham!



KETCHAM  
(walking down the hall with an armful  
of Baby Ruths)  
Yes sir.

KAZINSKY  
Where's this "Boom Boom" guy?

KETCHAM  
Six!

Lt. Kazinsky sidles down the hall to interrogation room 6.  
Boom Boom sits inside erect and patient--military all the  
way. Lt. Kazinsky enters.

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 6

KAZINSKY  
Boom Boom?

BOOM BOOM  
Yes sir.

KAZINSKY  
Interesting name. How'd you get it?

BOOM BOOM  
Nam. Explosives expert and tunnel  
rat, sir.

KAZINSKY  
Any idea what took out the lot?

BOOM BOOM  
My guess is about 4 pounds of C-4,  
sir.

KAZINSKY  
Do you remember stopping a salesman  
this evening speeding on the lot?

BOOM BOOM  
Carmen. Yes sir. He was exiting  
from the appraisal tent and I was  
required to remind him to slow down.

KAZINSKY  
Can you tell what he said to you?  
Did he seem anxious...or strange in  
any way?

BOOM BOOM  
I did see something...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT BACKLOT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

BOOM BOOM stands in front of the GREMLIN, holding his hand out like a traffic cop. He approaches the car.

BOOM BOOM  
Sir! This area is a 5 mile zone.  
Slow it down.

CARMEN  
Hey, Boom Boom, sorry. I got a 4 pounder on the line. Trying to get finished in time for the big boom.

BOOM BOOM  
You need to be careful, sir, with the explosives crew here.

CARMEN  
So, they're finally ready to shoot?  
I didn't think they'd ever get it set up...

BOOM BOOM  
Yes sir, they will be shooting in a few minutes.

(brightening)  
This reminds me of the tunnels in 'Nam. The smell of powder, setting the charge, and that moment just before the show...God I can't wait for it to blow.

CARMEN  
So, you got the job?

BOOM BOOM  
No, sir. Buford decided to do it himself. I did get to help with the set-up though. She's going to be a real show.

CARMEN  
Sorry, Boom Boom. You know, I can't wait to see her blow, either...too

CARMEN

(cont.)

bad we can't take old Buford out with it, eh?

BOOM BOOM

Yes sir. It never hurts to dream, does it, sir? Drive carefully, sir.

Boom Boom walks back towards a large wash bay with 4 stalls. There is furious activity of cars being washed and vaccumed by a crew of scraggly looking young men. Carmen drives towards the staging area and disappears around the corner.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 6

KAZINSKY

So, he wanted to take Buford out, eh?

BOOM BOOM

Everyone would have liked to see Mr. Smalls buy it...all due respect, sir, he was a thieving asshole. If he had been in 'Nam, we would have fragged him.

KAZINSKY

Fragged him?

BOOM BOOM

Yes sir. It was how the troops dealt with a superior that was unfit for command... (Kazinsky looks at him wide-eyed and expectant) We would put a grenade in their pants...maybe in the latrine.

KAZINSKY

So, did Buford steal anything from you?

BOOM BOOM

Promotion. Head of Body Shop. Just because he decided to let his nephew have a job. Yes sir, almost everyone had a bone to pick with Mr. Smalls in one way or another.

KAZINSKY

To your knowledge, was Carmen capable of this?

BOOM BOOM

To my knowledge, sir, I was the only one on the lot with the expertise to set those charges. If Carmen did, I wasn't aware of it.

KAZINSKY

You did set the charges, didn't you, "Boom Boom?"

BOOM BOOM

I did help the crew set up the shoot, yes sir...

KAZINSKY

That's right. You helped the crew set up the shoot, and then what? Did you try and "frag" Buford? Or, did you just want to blow the whole lot? I mean, you just said you were pissed that you lost your promotion. What happened, Boom Boom, did you figure because everyone hated Buford you could get away with this?

BOOM BOOM

No, sir! I did not blow it up. I would have to be fairly stupid, as the only known explosives expert, to blow the lot. In fact, I would be crazy to have done it.

KAZINSKY

Or, crazy like a fox? You're the most likely suspect, so that eliminates you from suspicion, right? Why shouldn't I charge you right now?

BOOM BOOM

Because of what I saw. Afterwards, I saw Carmen behind the parts building... and he was lighting a fuse of some kind...

Kazinsky pulls long and hard on the CIGAR, the END GLOWING brightly in the darkened room.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT BACKLOT EARLIER IN THE NIGHT

The GLOWING END of CARMEN'S "CIGARETTE" lights up the surrounding darkness. The FIREWORKS are in full bloom. In the light of the explosions we see CARMEN behind the parts building smoking his "cigarette." He bends down and lights a FUSE. From this vantage point we can't see the bottle rocket's flight. Carmen bends down, lights another fuse, draws on the roach once more, and disappears behind a row of trucks.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 6

KAZINSKY

So, you saw him lighting a fuse?

BOOM BOOM

Yes sir!

Ketcham bursts into the interrogation room.

KETCHAM

Lt. Kazinsky. Inspector Canon wants to see you in the lab. She said it's important.

KAZINSKY

Son of a...what's she got that's so important?

KETCHAM

She said something about different explosives...

KAZINSKY

I know...there was more than one bomb.

CUT TO:

INT EXPLOSIVES LAB

Kathryn Canon is inspecting fragments from the explosion. She hovers over a microscope in the small, but efficient lab. In the center of the room is a ten-foot long table, encircled by counter space around the outer walls with cabinets above.

Years of investigations and evidence have piled up, leaving the lab cluttered with an absent-minded professor look--disorganized, in an organized way. Lt. Kazinsky enters.

KAZINSKY

So what's this new evidence?

CANON

Oh, Kazinsky. You know how I told you that there were at least two bombs?

KAZINSKY

Yea. You dragged me down...

CANON

(interrupting)

Well, now there's three.

KAZINSKY

Three? Shit! You're saying there were three bombs?

CANON

Yes. At least three.

KAZINSKY

How do you know?

CANON

It's my job, remember? Look, I told you I suspected C-4 at the lot, right?

KAZINSKY

Yea. So were you right?

CANON

Yes and no.

KAZINSKY

Yes and no. Look, Canon, I don't have time for this...

CANON

(interrupting again)

YES, there was C-4. There was also Semtex and what I believe was a homemade pipe bomb made of Karo syrup--plastique. Now that's three

CANON

(cont.)

totally separate kinds of explosives.

KAZINSKY

Three? Why would someone use three different kinds?

CANON

They wouldn't--unless there were at least three bombers.

KAZINSKY

Three bombers? Hell, I know this guy Buford ain't well liked, but son of a bitch! I've got an ex-Army explosives expert who's pissed at him, a missing salesman who it appears would like to have stuffed little ol' Buford into his big ol' hat and now this?

CANON

I don't know what's going on here, but I think it's more than just one pissed off guy, or it's one extremely intelligent guy who's really pissed off...

Ketcham bursts into the lab, once again.

KETCHAM

Lt. Kazinsky. You're not gonna believe this...

CUT TO:

EXT NIGHT LOT LATER

FIRETRUCKS are trying to put out a BLAZE in another backlot building. The devastation is not as thorough as the previous bombs--just internal damage--the building's SHELL still stands.

Lt. Kazinsky's squad car SCREECHES up, he gets out, hitches up his pants, stuffs a new cigar in his mouth, and heads for the firetruck. Kathryn is right behind him.

KAZINSKY

Who's in charge, here?



FIREMAN

Waterman...over there.

WATERMAN, 20's, thin, medium build, stands next to a PUMPER TRUCK which is trying to get the blaze under control.

KAZINSKY

Waterman?

WATERMAN

Yes sir?

KAZINSKY

Jesus, you're still wet behind the ears. What the hell's going on here?

WATERMAN

We're kinda short-handed tonite...the 4th and all.

KAZINSKY

So, what do you got?

WATERMAN

Got?

KAZINSKY

Yea, what can you tell me?

WATERMAN

Seems a gas main went up...no surprise all the fireworks going on around here tonite.

CANON

It could've have been a gas main. We didn't have time to shut the place off after the first one. But, if it was gas it should've levelled the whole block. (to Kazinsky) Looks like you're right, Kaz, we've got # 4...

WATERMAN

Something else weird. We found a couple of plastic baggies blowing around here, some kinda white powder in them. (Hands the baggies to Kazinsky)

KAZINSKY

(sniffing the baggies)

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

Not that weird. Canon, I'll take this to Spats in Narcotics. You stay here. I want to know what this is and what the 4th was made of...

CANON

Whatever its made of, one thing's for sure...the way this place is going up...

Suddenly, an EXPLOSION rocks the building again, shooting debris into the night sky. Waterman, Kazinsky and Canon all dive under the pumper as firemen scatter, dodging the falling debris--TIRES. Tires are crashing down onto cars and what's left of the previously victimized buildings. Tires roll by as they speak.

WATERMAN

Boy, this guy sure likes tires.

KAZINSKY

Whatd'ya expect...it's a car lot. I want talk to that manager and find out if that's (acknowledging baggies) what I think it is.

CANON

Just gonna leave me here "treading" water, Kaz?

KAZINSKY

Oh, now that's witty...

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

Lt. Kazinsky, obviously frustrated, circles around a disinterested Preacher; Kazinsky takes a long draw on his cigar, leans in, sits, and blows the smoke in Preacher's face. Preacher is stoic and unmoved.

Lt. Kazinsky stands, turns, and speaks.

KAZINSKY

I don't suppose you can tell me anything about tires and cocaine, can you, "Preacher"?

PREACHER

Tires go on cars and cocaine's illegal?

KAZINSKY

(spinning around)

Look, Smartass, I've got a car lot raining tires all over the place as well as little baggies covered with white powder I think is Buford's stash. I've got a missing salesman who was pissed at Buford, as apparently everyone was, and I've got at least 4...no 5 bombs hitting the same place all within a few hours.

PREACHER

Tough day? Try getting someone with two BK's and a tax lien bought...now that's a tough day.

KAZINSKY

Look, Preacher, I want to know anything you can remember about this Carmen. It looks like the little shit has been running around all day setting enough explosives to level the whole town...at least enough to make sure you don't have a job anymore.

PREACHER

I'll always have a job, pal. As long as there's a car lot in this world and, well...you know what Ringling said...

KAZINSKY

Do you think Carmen could have been pissed enough at Buford for the Vegas thing to do this?

PREACHER

What Vegas thing? Oh, you mean having to leave the little unit home...standing policy for Buford. Can't very well throw a party with 50 hookers if guys take their main squeezes, eh? That way Buford could get a little something on the guys worth keeping, in case they ever

PREACHER

(cont.)

decided to give away trade secrets.

KAZINSKY

Wait a minute. I thought Carmen missed the trip to Vegas because he couldn't take his girl.

PREACHER

Carmen's been to Vegas twice with Buford. Hard to miss those trips when you're S.O.M. as often as he was. Went with Airbrakes in finance. Ask him, he'll tell ya.

CUT TO:

EXT LOT NIGHT

The lot still burns. WATERMAN and his crew have brought the flames under control and a WRECKER tows the VIPER'S shell away.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM MINUTES LATER

AIRBRAKES sits patiently chewing gum.

KAZINSKY

Tell me about the trip to Vegas with Carmen.

AIRBRAKES

Vegas? Sure. What do you want to know?

KAZINSKY

Scott Dunn, ex-finance man said Carmen didn't go to Vegas because Buford wouldn't let him take...how do you say it...his "little unit?"

AIRBRAKES

Dunn? Oh, yea, that's the guy I replaced...

KAZINSKY

(interrupting)

KAZINSKY

(cont.)

I know about Dunn...Vegas? The girl?

AIRBRAKES

CJ. Yessir, she's a hot one  
alright...only met her once. At  
Vultures...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT BAR NIGHT

VULTURES is a small, seedy little bar across the street from Hickeyland where the salesmen go after work to exaggerate the day's success and defeats. It has everything a car man needs: booze, naked women and a couple of pool tables.

The SMOKE, thick as early morning fog, wraps around the MEN sitting at the BAR, almost providing a barrier between them and the half-nude DANCER above them.

The BARKEEP, an older woman who looks as if she may have been an exotic dancer herself, gravelly voiced and drawn, flirts with an old, fat CAR MAN at the end of the bar.

CARMEN and AIRBRAKES are playing pool farther back, oblivious to the noise being pumped out of the WURLITZER near the table.

Airbrakes is in the middle of a run, and chatters incessantly as he rounds the table.

Carmen sits, absorbed, ignoring the fact he's losing.

AIRBRAKES

So I tell this little old lady,  
"Ma'am, you have to have a warranty  
to get the lender to finance the  
car..." Six ball, corner..."That way  
they know if your engine blows up  
you'll be able to continue making  
your payments." So, she says to  
me...seven ball, side... "but I can't  
afford another twenty dollars a  
month." So I defer to Preacher, come  
back, and tell her it's only 5  
dollars a month extra. Of course...  
eight ball, corner...it was a 1995er,  
and she's still ready to rip my head

AIRBRAKES

(cont.)

off, ungrateful bitch. So, I jammed her... Hell, I had so much water in the back, I got Credit Life and Accident and Health...nine ball side...at full POP! (he drops the nine ball on "pop"). Hey, Carmen, you paying attention here?

CARMEN

Huh? Sorry, A.B., I got something on my mind...

AIRBRAKES

Well, pal, that'll cost you twenty.

CARMEN

(hands him twenty)

Here, Moby's paying anyway.

AIRBRAKES

So, what's the problem, my man?

They leave the pool table and take a seat in front of one of the dancers. A WAITRESS comes by and takes their empties.

WAITRESS

Two more?

AIRBRAKES

Here, let me buy. (to waitress) Two Rolling Rocks. (to Carmen) With your money, buddy.

CARMEN

God, A.B., you're easy. Wish everything else was that simple.

AIRBRAKES

So, talk to me, my little head ripper. You've made me enough money this month, I figure I can spring for some free sessions. Fire away...

CARMEN

Aw, it's CJ. Buford won't let me take her to Vegas, again, and as if that wasn't bad enough, Buford says I gotta go or he'll dink me.

AIRBRAKES

You know, for twenty bucks and a case of ripple, I can make that guy go away...

CARMEN

Don't I wish. If I go on this trip C.J. will kill me. Or worse she'll leave...I just spent all day working some stupid cop and ripping his head off so we'd have plenty for CJ to gamble...

AIRBRAKES

Women. They don't get it. They love spending it, they just don't want us to do what we have to do to make it. Just tell Buford you'll pay for her...

CARMEN

I tried to at the meeting this morning...

AIRBRAKES

Now there's a fucking waste of time. Almost got hit in the head cause I missed that ridiculous shit. So, what happened? Hey! Did anyone pull the dime?

CARMEN

Yea, Moby. That's how he paid me on that bet from two weeks ago.

AIRBRAKES

So what'd I miss?

CARMEN

Green got there late...Preacher was being a dick, as usual...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT MEETING ROOM MORNING OF THE 4TH

The meeting room is set up almost like a church, There is a "pulpit" at the front of the room, behind which six or seven chairs are lined up. Off to the side is a table with a Continental style breakfast--rolls, muffins, coffee, juices--all as an incentive to induce the sales force to show up on time for the meeting. In front of the pulpit is about one



hundred chairs with an aisle down the middle. Salespeople are milling about, talking, laughing, smoking, drinking and eating. PREACHER gets up and calls the meeting to order.

PREACHER

Alright, assholes, let's go... let's GO!!

The salespeople start to fill in the chairs, still buzzing about last night's conquest or some big sale.

PREACHER

I said let's get started. That means you, Abdul, you fuckin' raghead. Alright, alright, let's do some bidness. First of all, I'd just like to say that I'm looking at the greatest sales force on the fuckin' planet! (the salespeople applaud and holler) Alright, alright, Jesus, you fuckers are rowdy. But that's good, because today we WILL set the single day's sales record of over two hundred units from retail! (more applause and hollering) You know, I been in this business twenty-one years and a more scurrilous bunch I've never seen, but I'm proud to work with each and every one of you. I'm reminded of a little deal we did yesterday. Abdul there had a real tight-ass. Motherfucker wanted to pay invoice for a new one ton! Well, we accommodated the ol' boy, didn't we, Abdul?

ABDUL

Yessir!

PREACHER

Mean ol' bastard, wasn't he?

ABDUL

Yessir, and so was his wife!

They all laugh.

PREACHER

God, she was a rugged ol' battleaxe. I hope she came, too, Abdul, or she

PREACHER  
(cont.)  
may hunt you down...

ABDUL  
I didn't touch her...couldn't find a  
board big enough to strap to my  
ass...

More laughter permeates the room.

PREACHER  
Well, we managed to make this guy one  
hell of a deal, hey, Abdul? How much  
did that deal make?

ABDUL  
Three grand...

PREACHER  
Three grand!! And how did we do it?  
We sold him the truck at invoice,  
just like he wanted. So, how'd we  
make three grand, Abdul?

ABDUL  
We stole from the trade!

Carmen and Moby are sitting in the back row talking amongst  
themselves.

CARMEN  
(to Moby)  
Oh, shit, get the kid...

GREEN tries to slip in, unnoticed.

PREACHER  
That's right, we stole from the  
trade. The moral of the story, boys  
and girls, is that every deal can be  
made if you work the system. That  
customer has already referred two  
family members and a neighbor  
because he's so happy that he stole  
one from us. Mr. Green, where the  
hell have you been?

GREEN  
Sorry, sir.

PREACHER

Yes, you are. You know, Mr Green,  
we've got a little rule here at  
Hickeyland about being late to a  
meeting...

They crowd of salespeople start CHANTING--SING! SING! SING!  
SING!

PREACHER

(cont.)

That's right, Mr. Green. If you're  
late for a meeting here, you gotta  
stand in front of this critical bunch  
of bastards and SING! So, get to  
singing!

CARMEN

(to Moby)

Aw, shit...he's gonna need help...

GREEN looks terrified. He stands there--mute. CARMEN pulls  
a sheet of PAPER from his pocket, gets up, walks down the  
aisle, and whispers in Green's ear, and hands him the paper.

Suddenly, A SMILE comes over Green's face, and he and Carmen  
begin to sing.

CARMEN AND GREEN

Juuuust sit right back and you'll  
hear a tale, a tale of a fateful  
trip...that started from this tropic  
port, aboard this tiny ship...the  
mate was a mighty sailing man, the  
skipper brave and sure, five  
passengers set sail that day for a  
three hour tour...a three hour  
tour... thuuuuuh weather started  
getting rough, the tiny ship was  
tossed...if not for the courage of  
the fearless crew the Minnow would be  
lost...

Some of the SALESPEOPLE begin to join in...

the Minnow would be lost...the ship  
set ground on the shore of  
this unchartered desert iiisle...

Most of the SALESPEOPLE are singing now...

with Gilligan...the Skipper, too...

Now they ALL chime in.

the Millionaire and his wife...the  
Movie star, the Professor and Mary  
Ann...here on Gilligan's Isle!!!

By the end of the song, everyone is singing, hooting and hollering. The sales staff is HIGH-FIVING each other and LAUGHING uncontrollably. The raucousness dies down, and Preacher continues his speech.

PREACHER

Now, that's the way to start a record-breaking sale!!! So, just remember when you're out there today and they're beatin the shit out of you...there's a deal there. So, let's get out there and rip some heads off!!!

They all cheer and holler.

CARMEN

(to Moby)

I'm about tired of the ol' Kitty. That bitch seems to know right where the bone in my ass is. I damn near couldn't walk the last time she was here.

MOBY

(to Carmen)

Maybe you oughta stick her once in a while. But, anyway, I got a pull coming, so pay attention.

PREACHER

Now we've got a little business to take care of before the nurse shows up to charge your batteries...a hat pull! (they all cheer) I believe Moby's up first, so c'mon you ol' car dog!

Moby steps out of the back and heads to the front. He reaches into a hat full of chips marked with varying denominations,

and with a flourish, pulls out one marked "1000."

MOBY  
EEEhahhhh! Hot fuckin damn!

Moby runs around the room high-fiving all the sales people and sticking the thousand dollar chip in their faces, all the way back to Carmen.

MOBY  
(to Carmen)  
Still hate this locker room shit now, buddy? I love it!

CARMEN  
(to Moby)  
Now maybe you can pay me for the Timmons deal?

MOBY  
I love you too, shithead.

Moby runs up the other side of the aisle and back to the front.

PREACHER  
Moby, you lucky prick. (looking in hat) You didn't have that taped down, did you? I guess not. Let's count out some spiff money!

They cheer as Preacher pulls out a wad of one hundred dollar bills big enough to choke an elephant. They all join in in the count.

PREACHER  
One...Two...Three...Four  
...Five...Six...Seven...  
Eight...Nine...a Thousand!

ANGLE ON The last one hundred dollar bill being placed in Moby's hand.

CUT TO:

INT VULTURES NIGHT

A one hundred dollar bill being handed to the waitress by Airbrakes for the beers.

AIRBRKES

So, when did you get to talk to  
Buford?

A DANCER turns and lowers her ASS into Carmen and Airbrakes' faces.

CARMEN

When Ol' Kitty showed up.

CUT TO:

INT MEETING ROOM MORNING AFTER THE MEETING

Another ASS. A NEEDLE suddenly appears, jabs the ass to a yelp, and pulls out.

MAN

Hey! Careful there, Nurse Wratchet.  
What's in that thing, anyway?

NURSE

Name's Kitty, Sonny. Just a little  
B-12 to pick you up.

ANGLE ON

The salespeople are lined up, overflowing out into the hallway, waiting for their shot. Carmen is back in the corner near the refreshments table talking to Buford.

BUFORD

I said no, Goddamnit, and that's that. No steady trim on the trip...it screws up the party. Besides, I ain't paying for every swinging dick to bring his steady pussy...leave me less for the crap tables.

CARMEN

But, Buford, I'll pay for her.  
Jesus, boss, she'll kick my ass if I leave her here.

BUFORD

Son, you need to learn who wears the dick in the family. The answer's NO! And don't plan on bowin' out again.

BUFORD

(cont.)

If you do, jes don't come back come Monday, you get my drift, boy?

CARMEN

Yessir.

PREACHER joins them.

BUFORD

Preacher, come with me, son.

They step to the back of the room. Carmen hovers around the refreshments table, sipping coffee and eavesdropping.

BUFORD

(cont.)

I want to side-pack everything today an extra nickel. I need a little extra for the crap tables...

PREACHER

You got it, Boss.

A loud OW! overlaps Preacher's reply.

CUT TO:

INT VULTURES MINUTES LATER

AIRBRAKES

Ow! That's gotta hurt. (feigning seriousness) I'm telling ya, Carmen, I'm surprised someone hasn't shot that little fucker or something...

CARMEN

Yea, well, we can always dream. You know, I really hate that high school locker room horseshit. And the way Buford steals ...Christ, another nickel pack.

AIRBRAKES

Yea, me too. But where you gonna get a job with no skills and this kind of freedom at a hundred grand a year? Yea, you gotta put up with Buford's shit.



CARMEN

I'd like to pick up Preacher and beat Buford to death with him...that'd fix most all our problems, eh?

AIRBRAKES

Hell, that'd be worth a dime for sure...

A SIREN wails and lights begin to flash. The rugged old barmaid lets out a holler.

BARMAID

Last Call! Last call for alcohol. Drink em up, boys. You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here.

AIRBRAKES

Awww! Shit. (to Carmen) You going home?

CARMEN

I'd better, or C.J. may beat me with ol' Ginger the Barmaid...

AIRBRAKES

Well, I'm gonna see if I can find a girl with her beer-goggles on to take me home and beat me...

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

A SIREN dies out as it passes the station. Lt. Kazinsky has a look of AHA! on his face. He circles the room, puffing ferociously on his stogie.

KAZINSKY

(thinking out loud)

I knew it. The simple explanation is usually the right one. (to Airbrakes) He's pissed that he can't take his girl and he has to go...So, what's the way out? Blow the place up. Buford can't go to Vegas if his lot is in pieces, so Carmen can stay and his "little unit" doesn't give him the boot!

## AIRBRAKES

You think he blew up the lot just so he wouldn't have to go to Vegas? Buford wouldn't give a shit. Hell, I watched him put a hundred thousand down on the pass line on a trip and roll snake eyes. Buford's got so much money, he'd just have Preacher and the rest of the managers have a "We've been blown up sale" or something. Besides, that ain't Carmen's style. Hell, you may as well go after the cop Carmen smacked that day...

Ketcham enters the room, irritated.

## KETCHAM

Lt. Kazinsky! We've got the owner in from the hospital. Seems it took more than an hour for them to dig all the keys out of his ass. Oh, and we've got Carmen's lady friend in room seven. She says she hasn't seen him since she left him this morning.

## KAZINSKY

Good work, Ketcham. Airbrakes, I think we're done for now, but I don't want you going anywhere just yet. (to Ketcham) Take him back to holding...

## KETCHAM

Yes sir.

Ketcham and Airbrakes leave as Kazinsky drifts towards the door behind them, pleased with himself, puffing on his cigar.

## KAZINSKY

(To himself)

I've got you, buddy. And your "little unit" is going to drive the last nail in your coffin.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 7 LATER

CJ sits at the table smoking a long, white cigarette. She

has a grace about her. The body skirt she wears barely covers her top or bottom as she sits cross-legged in the chair. She sits erect, as if she has had etiquette school training, though she has mastered the language of the car business, and uses it to her own purposes. Lt Kazinsky enters, and is obviously affected immediately. Now he sees why Carmen was so concerned.

KAZINSKY

Mrs. Lies?

CJ

No. C.J. Coy. Who wants to know?

KAZINSKY

I'm Lt. Kazinsky.

CJ

Really? That's funny. Isn't that the name of the...what'd they call him...the Unabomber?

KAZINSKY

(chagrinned)

I believe you're right, but there's no relation...

CJ

(affected yet distant)

So, I guess you wouldn't be a suspect, then. Am I? Or is Carmen? Where is he? Is he...dead?

KAZINSKY

We're not sure yet, but we don't believe so. As a matter of fact, we think he may have been involved in the bombing at Hickeyland this evening.

CJ

Carmen? No way.

KAZINSKY

Well, how else would you explain his absence? We don't have a body. Amazingly enough, no one has died from these explosions yet, so either the earth swallowed him up or he's around but doesn't seem to want to be found.

CJ

I can't. But it doesn't surprise me. That fuckin' lot has been keeping him away from me for years. Personally, I'm glad the place got levelled.

KAZINSKY

Aren't you worried Carmen might be dead?

CJ

(maintaining her composure)  
Yes. I am. But, what can I do about it? Would it be more appropriate if I were bawling my eyes out?

KAZINSKY

Well, it is a bit odd that you seem unaffected by his disappearance.

CJ

(starting to crack a little)  
You fuckin' men are all the same. If a woman shows the least bit of strength or sense of self, you think we're stone cold bitches who just don't care...well, I got news for you, Lieutenant, I do care about Carmen and I miss him. I just guess I've gotten used to him not being around for so long, it seems normal...

KAZINSKY

(empathizing)

Look, Miss, I'm not accusing you...

CJ

Yes, you are. You guys are all the same. You want to be mothered and whored...well, quite frankly, I've got enough problems just keeping myself together. I don't have the energy to be there to kiss every scraped knee or search through every blown up car lot...(losing her composure and beginning to cry) I love Carmen. And I hope he's not at the bottom of that shitty grown up toy store, I really do. Maybe now he'll quit this stinking "bogue

CJ

(cont.)

filled, rat infested," asshole-run enterprise and we can try and put our lives back together...if it's not too late.

KAZINSKY

Miss Coy, it's my job to find out what's going on here. I'm sorry I have to put you through this, but I need to know if Carmen has been acting strange lately. Anything out of character? Has he been distant...more than usual?

CJ

(regaining her poise)

No. We don't get to see much of each other. We work opposite hours, for the most part. I usually only see him at home on Sunday, or sometimes at night after work.

KAZINSKY

When's the last time you spoke to him?

CJ

Wednesday night. At Vultures.

KAZINSKY

Did anything seem out of the ordinary...was he upset or anxious...

CJ

Well, now that you mention it...

CUT TO:

INT VULTURES WEDNESDAY NIGHT

The bar. A sparse crowd goes about the business of enjoying the drink, song and women.

The BARMAID sits in her usual spot putting the make on another older man.

CARMEN is at the DANCER'S end of the bar, by himself, staring at a set of long, white, shapely legs of the dancer in front

of him. He converses with her between swigs of beer.

CARMEN

Whatd'ya say we get out of here? My girlfriend isn't home right now...

CJ'S FACE appears between the comely legs, upside down.

CJ

(playing along)

So, you looking to get lucky before the ol' ball-n-chain gets home?

CARMEN

Yea. I figure we got thirty minutes if we hurry...

CJ

(smirking)

Shit! You haven't ever finished in thirty minutes in your life.

CARMEN

Yea? Well, that's your fault. You're like Lays potato chips... no way I can eat just once.

CJ

You're pretty tasty yourself there, loverboy. Give me a minute to get dressed, OK?

CJ leans awkwardly between her legs and kisses Carmen.

CARMEN

Or maybe we could party right here?

CJ

Oh, you'd like that too much, wouldn't you? And maybe we could get Gaby to join in, huh?

CARMEN

Well...

CJ playfully slaps Carmen and kisses him again, then leaves the stage for the dressing rooms in back.

CARMEN finishes his beer, steps down from his stool, and saunters back to a small door at the back to wait. CJ

appears almost instantly.

CARMEN  
That was fast.

CJ  
I want to get you home before Gaby gets out here and you start thinking you got a chance. You're all mine tonight, big boy.

CARMEN  
Let's hurry.

CARMEN and CJ exit.

CUT TO:

EXT VULTURE'S PARKING LOT NIGHT

They walk to Carmen's demo, a new but surprisingly small economy car.

CARMEN grabs C.J.'s ass and embraces her, swinging her around playfully.

CJ  
You sure are feisty tonite, cowboy.

CARMEN  
Hey! I told you not to call me that... (feigning a drawl) I ain't no hick now, ma'am; I'm a city slicker.

CJ  
(playing hurt)  
Aw, I was hoping you'd have a loaded pistol I could borrow for a couple of hours.

CARMEN  
I got your pistol alright...

CARMEN sweeps CJ up off her feet in a grand embrace, spins around and drops her on the trunk of the demo.

He slides a hand up her thigh and she reaches into his pants, as if they are going to consummate the evening right there.

CARMEN

(cont.)

And I may just have to shoot you  
right here, little lady.

CJ LAUGHS and SQUIRMS, MOCK FIGHTING for her honor.

CUT TO:

EXT MOVING SHOT LATER WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Carmen's DEMO speeds down a deserted highway and exits.

CUT TO:

INT CAR NIGHT

CARMEN and CJ are silent at the moment, Carmen's previous exuberance having subsided and given way to a more somber mood. CJ is becoming uneasy, so she speaks to break the silence.

CJ

So, cowboy, you haven't petered out  
already, have ya?

CARMEN

(distracted)

Huh? Oh, no, hon...I'm just  
thinking.

CJ

About what?

CARMEN

CJ, Honey, what would you say if I  
quit Hickeyland? I mean, we wouldn't  
be hurting for money, I've got that  
covered...but maybe I could get a job  
that isn't so damn...ubiquitous?

CJ

Ubiquitous? Where'd that come from?  
Are you ok?

CARMEN

Yea. I'm trying to broaden my  
vocab...sorry. I'm just so tired of  
spending all my time at the lot. I  
hardly get to see you, and when I do



CARMEN

(cont.)

I'm usually so exhausted or pissed I can't be much fun to be around... bitching about the bogues and the weakstick finance department...I'm just fed up with the whole mess.

CJ

Well, if you're asking me if I want you to quit, you know the answer to that. I hate that place. Maybe you could go back to school?

CARMEN

Yea, maybe. But...hey, enough of this morbid shit. This cowboy's ready to ride.

CJ

Let's saddle up then, pilgrim.

They both begin to lighten up and laugh and CJ slides her hand back into Carmen's crotch.

CUT TO:

EXT CARMEN AND CJ'S HOUSE NIGHT

Carmen and CJ are entwined in one another in the doorway, as Carmen tries to find the keyhole in the dark. CJ isn't making it easy as she's undressing both herself and him right on the porch.

CARMEN

CJ! how'm I supposed to find the hole if you keep yanking on me?

CJ

(coyly)

Aren't I supposed to yank on it before you stick it in?

They laugh as the door swings open.

CUT TO:

INT HOUSE NIGHT

The DOOR to the bedroom swings open. Carmen and CJ are

embroiled in some serious physical heat. They fall to the bed, lips locked, semi-nude, and continue tearing clothes from one another. CJ rolls on top of Carmen and lets out a SQUEAL of delight.

CJ  
(laughing)  
Oh! You definitely are a cowboy!

CUT TO:

INT BEDROOM NIGHT

Carmen lies smoking a cigarette. CJ lies across his naked body with a smile of contentment and a dreamy, almost asleep look on her face.

CARMEN  
CJ, honey, I've got a surprise for you...for our anniversary.

CJ  
(half asleep)  
Huh? That's nice, Hon.

CARMEN  
We're going to have a great time...and Buford can go fuck himself...I got something for that asshole...Yessir...I do.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM

KAZINSKY  
So, he had something planned.

CJ  
For our anniversary. It's today.

KAZINSKY  
I think I've got enough, Miss Coy. I think you might want to have this.

He hands her the MALACHITE HEART she had once given Carmen.

CJ  
(getting up to leave)  
You know, Lt. Kazinsky, if Carmen did

CJ

(cont.)

do this...it would have been a great anniversary present.

CJ turns to leave, opens the door, tosses her cigarette on the floor and stubs it out. There are TEARS in her eyes, but she maintains her composure, and disappears in a cloud of smoke. Lt Kazinsky sits, and shakes his head.

KAZINSKY

Yes, Miss Coy, it was...

KETCHAM sticks his head in the door. He's excited, but exhausted as well.

KETCHAM

Sir?

KAZINSKY

What?

KETCHAM

Sir, the owner is screaming to see someone in charge. If you don't go talk to him, I'm gonna kill him...

KAZINSKY

Alright, let's go.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION

Lt. Kazinsky and Sgt. Ketcham head back out into the now pond of people still being processed. They make their way fairly easily now to the desk of the DESK SARGENT. BUFORD, still wearing the scars of the evening's earlier events, is SCREAMING at the DESK SARGENT, who still is unmoved.

BUFORD

Now, Goddamnit, I demand to see whoever's in charge of this circus...(to himself) fuckin' cops don't know dick about how to run an operation (to desk sargent); boy, I been diggin' keys outta my ass all night and I want to know what the hell is going on!!! Did you catch the sumbitch who blew up my lot?

DESK SARGENT

Look behind you...

Buford spins to look and comes face to face with Lt. Kazinsky's BADGE, which hangs from his neck.

BUFORD

Boy, you in charge here?

KAZINSKY

Yes. Lt. Kazinsky. You must be Buford.

BUFORD

Damn straight. Boy, what the hell's happened to my lot?

KAZINSKY

It blew up?

BUFORD

Damn right it blew up! Have you found out who's responsible, or you jes' like wearin' that little tin badge for show?

KAZINSKY

From all the people I've interviewed tonite, I'd say you're responsible. Oh, you may have not set the actual bomb, but you damn sure had it coming.

BUFORD

I'm Big Buford Smalls, Goddamnit. I run the biggest car lot in the whole friggin' world. Don't nobody talk to me like that, boy...

A LITTLE OLD LADY overhears Buford ranting and pushes menacingly through the crowd towards him. She gets angrier with each step closer to Buford. As Buford finishes his thought, she SMACKS him square on the head with her bag. BUFORD looks dumbfounded, and turns to see who could possibly be this crazy.

BUFORD

(cont.)

What the hell you think you're doin', little lady?

GRANNY  
You own Hickeyland?

BUFORD  
Damn tootin'...

The CROWD PARTS and forms a makeshift ring for Buford and Granny.

GRANNY  
You sold me a piece of crap! Put that "mystery oil" in it so's it wouldn't smoke for a while, til I owned it. (Granny begins to smack Buford incessantly with her bag as she speaks) I had to put a whole new engine in the damn thing a month after I bought it, you swindlin'...ASSHOLE!

GRANNY continues to pummel Buford who is now running around the "ring" looking for a way out. Suddenly, WILLIE steps in the ring and begins to complain.

WILLIE  
The truck I bought from you had busted springs not three months after I got it...

BUFORD now looks desperate. The whole crowd starts chiming in about vehicles they've bought and the problems they've had with them.

Buford spies the high ground of the DESK SARGENT'S DESK, takes a running leap and flies over it to safety.

The crowd is getting nastier by the second when the DESK SARGENT picks Buford up from behind the desk and sets him squarely on top of it, forcing him to face the unruly mob.

BUFORD  
(bug-eyed)  
Now wait! Wait jes'ta minute!  
I only own the place...I got buyers who buy them cars and managers who trade for 'em and sell 'em...all I do is make the commercials and...

GRANNY  
And steal our money. That's all you do!

WILLIE

Yea! You try feedin a hundred head of cattle in the dead of winter when the springs on your truck are so busted it won't even carry three bales at a time!

BUFORD

All I try to do is run a bidness and make a profit. You people come in with lousy credit and no money and expect to leave with a new truck for a hunnert a month. Jesus, can't you people add?

GRANNY

That's because that's what your commercials tell us we can do... good credit, bad credit, NO CREDIT!

BUFORD

Hell, Gramma, if we didn't run those commercials, you'd never come in. You folks is wantin' somethin' for nuthin' and as long as we tell you you can have it you're happy. You don't want to hear "4000 down" or "450 a month." You don't want no fair deal... You wanna be SOLD! You all LOVE to be sold. You love it when we sit with you for hours listening to stories about little Lisa's tooth fallin' out or little Bobby winnin' third place at the hog show. YOU'RE the ones responsible. Do you walk into Wal-mart and tell the cashier "this pen's too damn high at sixty-nine cents...I'll give you a quarter"? Hell, NO! And those places have a hunnert to a thousand percent mark up. We got between three and ten percent mark up, and you'd think we were thieves. Hell, you leave a thirty percent tip jes' cause some pimply faced kid who don't wanna real job brings you a hamburger. It ain't my fault, I'm jes' trying to keep my business goin' and providin' for the folks who work for me. If anyone's to blame...it's you all...

The crowd is silent. What Buford has said has struck a chord. Then...

GRANNY

Bullshit! You sold me that lemon and you're gonna pay...

Buford starts a wheeling and dealing again.

BUFORD

It's the SALESMEN'S fault, not mine...

Suddenly, into the station steps CARMEN. He doesn't look much better than Buford did when the lot blew.

BUFORD

(cont.)

And there's one of the varmits now!

The CROWD SPINS in unison and goes silent. CARMEN stands there looking at the crowd looking at him. LT. KAZINSKY steps through the crowd and confronts him.

KAZINSKY

Why'd you do it, son?

CARMEN

(coughing)

Do what?

KAZINSKY

Blow up the lot.

CARMEN

I didn't blow it.

KAZINSKY

Come with me...

BUFORD

(lunging at Carmen)

I'll kill ya, ya slimy, little...

SARGENT KETCHAM steps in and stops Buford short of Carmen's throat.

BUFORD

(cont.)

Ya blew up my lot, ya bastard!

CARMEN

I didn't do anything wrong, you  
sawed-off little shit.

KAZINSKY

(to Ketcham)

Take him to observation room 3

(to Carmen)

You're coming with me.

Ketcham takes Buford off in front of Kazinsky and Carmen, who  
leave right behind them.

CUT TO:

INT INTERROGATION ROOM 3 MOMENTS LATER

Buford sits as Kazinsky paces and puffs on his cigar.

BUFORD

It wudn't Buscotti, was it?

KAZINSKY

How the hell would I know?

BUFORD

Look, Buscotti missed picking up the  
tires tonite, how do you explain  
that?

KAZINSKY

Look, asshole, I haven't been around  
Buscotti for a long time now, so what  
you two idiots are doing is something  
I wouldn't know. Besides, I still  
think you may have blown it yourself  
for the insurance.

BUFORD

Why the hell would I kill the biggest  
cash cow this side of G.M.? If it  
wudn't Buscotti, it was that little  
shit, right there, and I want a piece  
of his ass!

Buford and Kazinsky spy Carmen through the two way glass of  
the observation room. Kazinsky stops, takes a long draw on  
the cigar, exhales and speaks.



KAZINSKY

I'm gonna let you in there with me,  
and we're gonna figure this out.  
But, you gotta stay calm, or I'll  
have Ketcham pull you right outta  
those boots and lifts so fast...

BUFORD

Alright, alright! I just wanna make  
sure the little shit gets what's  
coming to 'im.

Kazinsky and Buford leave.

CUT TO:

INTERROGATION ROOM

Carmen watches blankly as Kazinsky and Buford enter.  
Kazinsky places a chair in the corner, away from Carmen, and  
motions Buford over. He then draws on the cigar, blows the  
smoke into Carmen's face, and speaks.

KAZINSKY

Let's look at what we got.  
Hickeyland has been blown to shit,  
and you've been gone all evening.  
Boom Boom saw you lighting a fuse  
just before the explosion. The way I  
see it, you've got 20 to life, if you  
cooperate.

CARMEN

I didn't blow up the lot. I snuck  
behind the parts building to take a  
few hits and watch the fireworks. I  
was shootin bottle rockets at Buford,  
and suddenly there was this loud  
boom, and the ground opened up and  
swallowed me. I just woke up ten  
minutes ago...

BUFORD

Why you little sawed-off shit. I  
knew I shoulda hit you in the head...

CARMEN

Look, you thieving prick, I know  
about Buscotti and the tires and the  
dope, just like the Lieutenant here.

CARMEN

(cont.)

Now, if all that comes out, assuming I were responsible for the lot and were to go to trial, both of you assholes are going down with me, you catch my drift, boy?

BUFORD

(attacking him)

You lousy little...

KAZINSKY

(heading Buford off)

Buford! Goddamnit, don't be stupid. He's right. If this gets out, I lose my badge and you lose the insurance. You know that lot's built over the old prison. There are more tunnels under there than you got ways of stealing from your salesmen. He's lucky he's not dead. Setting a bomb that size, it'd be stupid to be anywhere around.

Suddenly, a low rumble is heard in the station. Ketcham steps into the room.

KETCHAM

Lieutenant, you're not going to believe this. One of our men at the lot radioed in that there was another explosion and now it...it...

KAZINSKY

Well, spit it out, Ketcham.

KETCHAM

It's snowing, sir.

KAZINSKY

Buford, shall we go?

Buford, Carmen and Lt. Kazinsky follow Ketcham out of the room. Buford is unconvinced, and fumes as he looks at Carmen.

CUT TO:

EXT LOT MORNING

The SUN is beginning to rise. CARMEN, KAZINSKY, and BUFORD, the crowd behind them, survey the final damage to the lot. The SHOWROOM, the last remaining building, has been levelled. During the explosion, the COWBOY'S head has been severed and hangs pathetically cockeyed from the sign, the only remaining thing left standing on the lot. A fine powder wafts in the breeze making the scene look literally like Christmas in July. A light rain has begun to fall.

BEN

Looks like a car graveyard to me.  
Except for this dust. What is this  
stuff?

KAZINSKY

(to Buford)

Yes, I wonder what it is?

BUFORD

Look, asshole. I ain't gonna take  
anymore shit from you or this bomb-  
crazy bastard. You wanna lock me up?  
I'm sure Buscotti would be real  
interested in talkin' to you when I  
get done...

Kazinsky goes for Buford, but Carmen steps in and holds him back.

KAZINSKY

You little runt! You ain't got shit  
on me and I'm gonna lock you and your  
whole damn crew up for a hundred  
years...

CARMEN

Goddamnit! Are you both nuts? Look  
Lt. Kazinsky, even I know that you  
used to be on Buscotti's payroll, so,  
it's for sure that Buford's got  
enough on you to sink your ship just  
as deep as you can sink his. And  
Buford, you stupid, greedy little  
man, you're fucking with the law  
here. You think your money is going  
to get you out of this? Both of you  
need to shut up and try and figure  
out something where we all don't end  
up breaking rocks forever.

Carmen's eyes light up. He turns to Buford and Kazinsky.

CARMEN

That's it! Buford, how'd you like to go into a recession-proof business?

BUFORD

Like what? Ain't nothin better than the car business. I'm gonna have to bulldoze this thing and start all over...

CARMEN

That's the point. Look, Ben here has been working at Franklin's for 20 years or so. It's right next door to here, so why don't you open a...

BUFORD

A graveyard!!??

CARMEN

Yessir! Statistics say that by the year 2000, 35% of the population will be over 65. They all gotta die sometime...

BUFORD

(getting excited)

So, why not have 'em die for me? Hickeyland Rest. Hell, boy, I think you're on to something. People keep getting old, and they all gotta die...hell, it's a growth industry! How's the space over there at Franklin's? Gettin a little tight?

BEN

Well, we are sorta gettin packed in a bit, why?

BUFORD

(to Kazinsky)

You gotta help me keep Buscotti out of this, you got me?

KAZINSKY

Alright, but how are we gonna explain all this?

CARMEN

Cover it up. Claim the commercial explosion set off a gas main or a bunch of stored chemicals. No one's gonna care that this place went up. Hell, call it terrorists. Buford gets the insurance either way, and you're covered, too.

KAZINSKY

That's all fine and dandy, but we've got a ton of cocaine floating around here. How do you explain that?

CARMEN

Easy. The service department is connected to the main showroom, right, Buford?

BUFORD

Yea. So what?

CARMEN

So, we had one of Buscotti's trucks in for service, right?

KAZINSKY

You wanna fuck Buscotti? Are you crazy?

CARMEN

Like a fox. Look, Buscotti is known as a drug dealer and he's got so many judges in his pocket he can get out of something, this...what do you call it...circumstantial with no sweat. Simply go to Buscotti and let him know what you're doing and tell him if he stays out of the way you won't go after him for real. The money he'll save not having you on his ass for real has got to be worth it to him. I mean, you got out from under him before, so, this oughta be a piece of cake.

KAZINSKY

It just might work. But what if he doesn't go for it?

CARMEN

I guarantee if you tell him that Buford's willing to turn on him, he'd be stupid to not go for it. Just tell him you're going to retire and go into business with Buford, and you will personally make sure this is off his plate before you go.

BUFORD

I like it.

Suddenly, the HEAD on the cowboy falls from the sign, almost hitting Buford. Granny walks up from behind him.

GRANNY

Serves you right, you little runt. And don't be thinking any of my friends or me are gonna be back here anytime soon.

BUFORD

Little lady, you may be back sooner than you think.

KAZINSKY

So, Buford, any chance of investing in this little venture?

BUFORD

Sure thing, pardner. You keep Buscotti outta my hair, and this could be the beginning of a profitable relationship.

Buford puts his arm around Ben, and he, Ben, and Kazinsky walk off towards the sun. Debris falling from the sky is wafting down and the powder is being knocked out of the sky by the persistently growing rain. A one-hundred dollar bill falls at the feet of Green, who stands behind the trio. The image of Ben has a twinkle in its eye. Green bends over to pick it up, and Ben speaks.

"BEN"

Let's do bidness...

CJ and CARMEN stand alone as the crowd disperses.

CJ

I believe you lost this...

CJ puts Carmen's malachite HEART he'd lost at the lot around his neck and kisses him.

CARMEN

No, I just found it...

CJ

I love you, Carmen Lies.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON THE BILL.

BEN WINKS.

BLACK OUT.

THE END.

VITA

Scott Lyon Surber

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: CARMEN LIES

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in LaJolla, California,  
November 24, 1958.

Education: Graduated from Midwest City High  
School, Midwest City, Oklahoma, in May, 1976;  
received Bachelor of Arts in Speech and  
Theatre from Oklahoma State University in  
December, 1988. Completed requirements for  
Master's of Arts in English at Oklahoma State  
University in December, 1998.

Professional Experience: Teaching Assistant,  
Department of English, Oklahoma State  
University, August 1989 to May, 1993.